

Committee of Six Minutes of Monday, September 19, 2016

Amended October 4, 2016

The first meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, September 19, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder. President Martin and Dean Epstein opened the meeting by welcoming the five new members of the committee and returning member Professor Hart.

Under “Topics of the Day,” Dean Epstein offered a brief update on the drought situation. The official status of the town of Amherst and much of the state of Massachusetts is “Extreme Drought.” The dean explained that the drought has placed a strain on the town’s water system, which supplies the college with water. The town’s system is not in danger of running out of water, in part because of the success of ongoing water conservation measures, she noted. In the unlikely event of an emergency, for example a water-main break, that would have an impact on the reliability of the water system for a period of time, the college, as well as the town, is prepared to take more aggressive conservation actions.

In her remarks, President Martin noted that she will be traveling a great deal this semester as part of fundraising efforts on the college’s behalf. Amherst is preparing for a comprehensive campaign.

Dean Epstein reviewed issues of confidentiality and attribution in the committee’s minutes, noting that the public minutes should be used as a guide in regard to questions of whether matters discussed by the committee can be shared with others. She informed the members that, in her experience, very few conversations (with the exception of personnel matters and committee nominations that are under consideration) have not been included in the committee’s public minutes. Dean Epstein explained that minutes of discussions of certain sensitive or unresolved matters and plans in their formative stages, about which the president and the dean are seeking the advice of the Committee of Six, have sometimes been kept confidential. Generally, conversations about these issues are made public once the matter is in a less tentative state. The dean next discussed the circumstances under which the committee would communicate via email. It was agreed that email will not be used to communicate about personnel or other confidential matters, and that the use of email should be kept to a minimum in general.

Continuing with her remarks about the ways in which the committee will work, Dean Epstein discussed with the members the longstanding policy of appending letters to the minutes when the committee has discussed the matters contained within them. Colleagues are informed by the dean’s office as to when their letters will be appended. If a colleague states at the outset that he or she does not want the contents of a letter discussed in the public minutes, the committee will decide whether it wishes to take up the matter in question. The members decided that, for reasons of transparency, comments by committee members should be attributed by name in the minutes. It was agreed that the committee’s regular meeting time will be 3:05 P.M. on Mondays. The members then decided that the following dates should be held for possible faculty meetings during the fall semester: November 1, November 15, December 6, and December 20. It was agreed that Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer Norm Jones will be invited to attend meetings of the faculty as a guest.

The dean informed the members that Janet Tobin, associate dean for academic administration, will continue to serve as the recorder of Committee of Six minutes. Nancy

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Ratner, associate dean of admission and director of academic projects, will serve as the recorder of the faculty meeting minutes. Continuing her remarks, Dean Epstein explained that Lisa Rutherford, Amherst's chief policy officer and general counsel, will meet with the Committee of Six on September 26 to provide general legal advice related to the processes for reappointment and tenure, as an attorney does on an annual basis.

Conversation turned to a draft of a letter to the faculty that the dean had provided to the committee in advance of the meeting about three distinctive teaching opportunities that will be offered to help foster and further pedagogical experimentation, expand the curriculum, and enhance students' academic experiences. As noted in the letter, the dean will invite the faculty's proposals to participate in these offerings, which will be funded through her office. The three opportunities are Point/Counter Point Seminars, courses that integrate extended travel, and Research Tutorials in the humanities and "humanistic" social sciences (these tutorials are identical in format to the current Mellon Tutorials, but since the Mellon grant will soon end, and the tutorials will be funded by the college in the future, these courses will no longer carry *Mellon* as part of their titles). Dean Epstein explained that members of the class of 1970 have provided funding to support the Point/Counter Point Seminars.

The committee expressed enthusiasm for the new offerings. Professor Call suggested that visitors who are brought to the college to participate in Point/Counter Point Seminars be invited to offer at least one public presentation at Amherst. In this way, the impact of the seminars may extend beyond their participants to include the broader campus community. Professor Sitze also proposed a change to the description of the Point/Counter Point Seminars. He recommended that language be inserted that distinguishes the sort of debate that would be desired from the shouting matches that pass for debate on cable television. In particular, he suggested that emphasis be placed on the need for these courses to model the norms of civility and reasoned analysis that are necessary for constructive public discourse. Professor Van Compernelle asked about the reasons for the enrollment limit (normally up to twelve students) that will be set for funded courses that integrate extended travel. The dean responded that budgetary constraints, educational considerations, and logistical factors led her to set the limit. Professor Van Compernelle raised the question of whether two faculty members who are co-teaching a course would be permitted to provide twenty-four or twenty-five students with an extended travel experience. The dean expressed some hesitation about a group of this size, but said that she would think more about this idea. Professor Hansen suggested that there be greater clarity in the letter about the programs that will include honoraria for faculty. He asked whether the structure of these offerings, including enrollment limits, may prevent faculty in the sciences from participating. The dean said that an Amherst faculty member in the sciences has already offered a course with a travel component to twelve students, and that it was a highly successful experience. It is her hope that faculty across the disciplines will submit proposals to participate in the new opportunities. The dean thanked the members for their suggestions and advice and said that she would send the letter out this week. ([The final version of the letter](#)) was sent to the faculty on September 21.)

Turning to another topic, Professor Call asked the dean for information about the advising network pilot program that is currently under way. The dean explained that, with the goal of providing enhanced support and helping to facilitate the transition to college, students who participated in Amherst's 2016 Summer Humanities and Social Sciences Program and Summer

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Science Program were assigned to alumni-mentors and to faculty advisors who had agreed to provide more intensive, expansive, and targeted advising. The background and Amherst experience of the mentors served as the basis of the match between the current students and the mentors, all of whom graduated from the college within the last ten years. The mentors connected with their mentees before the start of the semester and will work with them periodically throughout the year, Dean Epstein noted. The mentors will provide guidance and advice based on their experience at the college and the perspectives that they have gained from reflecting on that experience. What worked for them as students? What challenges did they face? How did they respond? What would they have done differently? What are they glad they did?

Continuing, Dean Epstein explained that fourteen faculty members are participating in the network. Each will advise either one or two students from the summer programs as part of their regular group of first-year advisees. They will meet with them frequently, at least once a month during the 2016–2017 academic year. Because students who participate in the summer programs have their “orientation advising” done at the end of those programs, the faculty advisor’s work began after the regularly scheduled day of orientation advising. In addition to the regular work of academic advising, the faculty will extend the range of their conversations to help facilitate the academic, social, and extracurricular success of the students. The advisors will receive special training and meet monthly with the other faculty who are participating in the advising network to share experiences and learn about best practices. Professor Hansen, who is participating in the pilot, offered praise for the program. He expressed the view that launching this effort with the students from the two summer programs makes a great deal of sense.

Updating the committee, Dean Epstein informed the members that it is her understanding that the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Faculty Meeting Hours hopes to bring forward some ideas toward the end of the fall semester. Professor Moss asked about the demography of the membership of the committee, emphasizing the importance of ensuring—through representation—that the perspectives of untenured faculty who are the parents of young children are included. The dean noted that last year’s Committee of Six had appointed two full professors and two assistant professors (Professors George, the chair; Móricz; Trapani; and Young), the registrar, and the director of the Office of Institutional Research to the ad hoc committee. She confirmed that there are parents of young children serving on the ad hoc committee.

The dean next informed the members of the results of her invitation of last March to academic departments and programs to make proposals to design course sequences and majors that will help Amherst students engage more deeply with what they are learning. Proposals from the [Department of Economics](#) and the [Department of Geology](#) were selected. Support for these initiatives is being provided through Amherst’s “Reimagining the Commons” grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional funding from the dean. The dean’s office provided funding for a third proposal that will enhance the teaching of Japanese language at the college. Professor Call asked how the proposals had been chosen. The dean responded that a committee of faculty (Professors Gentzler, Umphrey, Redding, and Sanderson) had made recommendations to her, with assistance from hari stephen kumar, director of Instructional and Curricular Design Services and associate director of the Teaching and Learning Collaborative, and Lisa Stoffer, director of the Grants Office, who will continue to work with departments with funded proposals. The impact that the proposed efforts would have on the department’s

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curriculum as a whole, and thus on the curriculum of the college, was a primary criterion for the selection of the proposals, the dean explained. Departments that submitted proposals in this round that were not funded received feedback; they have been encouraged to revise their proposals and to resubmit them for the next round of funding. The dean said that she anticipates that more departments will be interested in applying for support. It will be helpful to gain a better sense of best practices from the implementation of these initial proposals, she noted. President Martin said that it is her hope that, ultimately, every academic department and program will develop proposals to explore ways of ensuring that all Amherst students have access to the entire curriculum.

The members then reviewed proposals for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Stipend competition and the Mellon New Directions Fellowship and selected nominees. Professor Moss suggested that mechanisms for increasing the number of applications from faculty for these and other fellowships should be explored. Dean Epstein noted that significant outreach is done already through communications to the faculty as a whole and to individual faculty through the dean's office, through fellowship workshops offered by the dean's office and the Grants Office, and through individual assistance offered through the Grants Office. She said that she would be open to suggestions for other approaches. President Martin offered praise for the expertise of Ms. Stoffer and her staff in aiding faculty who are seeking external funding.

Dean Epstein reviewed with the committee a list of potential agenda items for the Committee of Six for the year and asked the members if they would like to propose additional items. It was agreed that major issues for discussion by the committee this fall will include diversity and inclusion (including the views of External Advisory Committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Excellence); compensating chairs of departments and programs; tenure procedures for senior hires; and tenure procedures for joint appointments. Professor Hart asked if background checks were on the agenda, as the topic was under discussion last year. The dean responded that there are no plans to implement background checks for faculty candidates at this time. Professor Hansen said that he is interested in having a discussion about managing the enrollments of classes. He commented that course enrollments vary tremendously, often for no reason other than historical accident. At present, he continued, students taking introductory biology, introductory chemistry, or organic chemistry can often find themselves in classes with enrollments of more than one hundred. The dean said that she would put this topic on the committee's agenda for the spring and suggested that it would be informative to ask Jesse Barba, director of the Office of Institutional Research, to provide data on course enrollments.

Continuing with the discussion of the committee's agenda, Professor Call asked if the Committee of Six will be discussing the report of the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst. The president responded that the report will be a topic of discussion at the Committee of Six's next meeting; the report will be shared with the faculty afterward. She has asked Don Faulstick, director of athletics, to write a response to the report. That document and some of her thoughts will also be provided to the committee prior to the next meeting. The president said that she will ask the Committee of Six to think with her about next steps, noting that one or more recommendations suggest further study by the Committee on Education and Athletics. Professor Call asked if the report has been provided to the Board of Trustees.

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President Martin said that the report was made available just before the commencement meeting of the board, but that discussion by the board awaits campus conversation.

With the goal of discussing ways to expand access for students to participate in the governance of the college, Professor Moss asked that the topic of the selection process for student-members of faculty committees—in particular the role of the Association of Amherst Students (AAS)—be placed on the Committee of Six’s agenda. This matter may be raised in regard to the expected proposal from the College Council to revise its charge, the dean said. Professor Call noted that the question of to what extent the faculty can or should determine how students select their representatives is complex. It was agreed that the committee should discuss this issue in the spring.

Professor Hart noted that, as a former student-athlete at Amherst, he had recently received [a letter](#) from Megan Morey, chief advancement officer, and Don Faulstick, director of athletics, regarding a request from the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to the college. He asked President Martin if she could provide the context for the request. President Martin explained that, in August 2016, the NCAA had reached out to all of its member institutions to request contact information for all current and former NCAA student-athletes. The NCAA had asked for this information as part of a court monitored and approved “notice plan” in connection with the settlement of a class action lawsuit against the NCAA by former student-athletes who have suffered concussions. The settlement makes available to current and former student-athletes certain medical services, including physical examinations, neurological measurements, and neurocognitive assessments. Based on a variety of unique factors, including that the NCAA was prepared to subpoena the information and the determination by the college’s in-house attorneys that Amherst would not have a solid basis to object to any such subpoena, the decision was made to provide the information voluntarily, in advance of the NCAA’s deadline of September 16. As a courtesy to Amherst’s current and former student-athletes, the college had sent an email (to those for whom Amherst has an email address) or letter (to those for whom the college does not have an email address) advising them of Amherst’s compliance with the NCAA’s request. Professor Hart thanked the president for this information.

Turning to another topic, Professor Hart asked the members whether they feel it is their role to represent particular constituencies—for example their departments, students, or themselves—as individual faculty members. Professor Hansen expressed the view that each member brings his or her own knowledge and expertise to the work of the committee, but that each member should also strive to avoid partisanship. The dean concurred and added that members should seek to represent the faculty as a whole and to serve the interests of the college as best they can.

Noting that some new members of the faculty seem not to be aware of the college’s policy about auditing classes, Professor Moss suggested that it would be helpful to share this information with new faculty, and more broadly. The dean said that she would research whether there is a formal policy in place. In practice, those seeking to audit a course at Amherst must obtain the permission of the faculty member who is teaching the course; the decision to accept an auditor has rested solely with the faculty member.

Conversation turned to [a preliminary report from the External Advisory Committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Excellence](#). The president constituted the advisory committee last fall and invited the group to visit Amherst on April 22, 2016. Prior to the visit, during which the committee had met with faculty, students, and administrators, the group had been provided with

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a great deal of data about the college. President Martin reminded the members that she had summarized the external committee's preliminary observations at a faculty meeting last May. She informed the members that the group will return this spring and then two years afterward. As part of this review process, this fall the college will prepare a self-study focusing on its diversity and inclusion efforts, with the goal of completion of the document this spring. The external committee will be asked to respond to the self-study this spring, as well. Former trustee Danielle Allen, director of the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics and professor of government and American politics at Harvard, is chairing the advisory committee, which includes seven other leaders in the area of diversity and inclusion within higher education. President Martin commented that the membership of the external committee may change over the years, based on the members' availability over time.

Professor Hansen said that nothing in the report of the external committee came as a surprise or proved shocking, given the events of the last academic year and President's Martin's comments at the faculty meeting. Professor Hart wondered whether the report goes far enough to help move the college's agenda forward. Professor Call agreed that the report wasn't surprising, but said he found the report's organization of key issues helpful. Professor Hansen pointed out what may be a factual error in the report on page four, namely the statement that "failed courses can't be re-taken." Dean Epstein said that she would re-read the policy on re-taking courses and report back to the committee with her findings. (It was later confirmed that the statement was a factual error. The error will be brought to the attention of the advisory committee.) She noted that the Curriculum Committee plans to make a series of recommendations this fall to the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), which would then come before the faculty, to address concerns about some academic policies that can inhibit flexibility and contribute to academic stress among students. Examples include pass/fail options, deadlines for dropping courses, and greater flexibility around incompletes and extensions.

President Martin informed the members that it came as somewhat of a surprise to the external committee that the issues that persist at Amherst regarding the curriculum and other aspects of academic life appear to be even more serious than the challenges that the college faces in the realm of social life, which are also of concern. President Martin commented that the external committee had noted an academic achievement gap at Amherst, which can take a number of forms. An example of such a gap is the challenges to success that many less well-prepared students face in STEM fields. Some students with whom the external group had spoken said that they don't feel that they have access to the entire curriculum and don't feel confident that they can succeed in all majors, the president explained. Professor Hansen pointed out that an achievement gap can follow from a preparation gap. President Martin concurred, while noting that, if the college brings less well-prepared students to Amherst, there should be a commitment to ensuring their success. At present, for some students, there is a gap between what they want to do, and what they do. She noted that addressing the gap places a burden on the faculty and noted that progress has been made; many less-well prepared students at Amherst succeed in fields in which achievement gaps often exist. Professor Call commented that he is thrilled with the changes that have taken place within the Department of Mathematics and Statistics (his own department), where intensive work by the faculty has resulted in student-majors that now mirror the racial and socioeconomic make-up of the student body as a whole. He noted the important role that instilling confidence plays in students' success.

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The committee discussed whether the college is doing the right things to “move the needle,” without taxing the faculty too heavily. The dean commented that more faculty are needed to meet the needs of Amherst’s new student body. Professor Call agreed, expressing the view that more faculty are needed, in particular, in disciplines that are in high demand by students. The president concurred, while noting the importance, and the challenges, of not shifting away from the humanities in the process—in keeping with Amherst’s commitment to the liberal arts mission.

Continuing the conversation about the report, Professor Van Compernelle expressed the view that the external committee had placed insufficient emphasis on the role of residential life in an Amherst education. He said that he would welcome an opportunity to have a broader conversation about the value of a residential education. The members discussed the tradition of self-segregation by the student body within residential life. President Martin commented on the progress that has been made to address this issue, through the new room-draw process and the replacement of the “social dorms” with the new “greenway dorms.” Students from different class years were intentionally mixed in the new dorms, which offer multiple room types. While a small number of student groups have nevertheless found ways to cluster together in residences, progress has been made in moving away from this model, the president said. She offered praise for the ways in which Don Faulstick, director of athletics, and coaches are working to persuade student-athletes that it is not in the college’s best interest, or their own, to perpetuate an “athlete’s village.”

Professor Van Compernelle stressed the importance of defining diversity and inclusion at Amherst, as did the external group. President Martin noted that the [1996 Board of Trustees’ statement on diversity at Amherst](#) articulates effectively the importance of diversity and inclusion at the college and offers a definition that remains compelling and reflective of the college’s goals. Professor Hansen commented on the view expressed on page two of the report that Amherst’s open curriculum poses special challenges to the success of less well-prepared students, who may struggle with the selection of courses from “within the broad field of possibility of an open curriculum.” In the sciences, he noted, the problem may be that the highly structured curricula of many majors offer few electives, i.e., not very much choice. The problem of achievement is also compounded for students who are pursuing a pre-medical course in which grades play a very important role, Professor Hansen noted. Professor Van Compernelle commented that it is part of the mission of the liberal arts to expose students to many academic areas and to give them agency to change their minds about what they want to study. Professor Moss noted that Amherst, as it should, admits students who are “at very different places” in regard to preparation. The question to address, in her view, is “what is the added value of an Amherst education?” To inform a conversation about this issue, she would like to see more data about achievement relative to students’ starting points when they enter the college. It was agreed that the committee should have such a discussion, with data provided by the director of the Office of Institutional Research.

Continuing the discussion on the topic of diversity and inclusion, Professor Van Compernelle expressed the view that some international students seem to feel that they are not part of the conversation about how Amherst should be shaped. Though there is a sizable body of international students at Amherst, some students have expressed to him that they feel overlooked. Professor Sitze agreed. He suggested that it would be helpful to work with Norm

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Jones, chief diversity and inclusion officer, to examine the language used about diversity in the college's statements and policies and to make recommendations in regard to substance, in some cases, and consistency.

Professor Sitze commented that he shares some of the external committee's concerns about the way the concept of diversity is discussed at the college. To try to answer the question posed by the external committee, he said, he reviewed the amicus brief filed by the college in the 2012 Supreme Court case *Fisher v. University of Texas*. There he detected three different usages of the term diversity. The first was "broad diversity," which includes differences that are not defined by race (economic background, geographic origin; athletic, artistic, and musical ability; public vs. private schooling; etc.). Here diversity seems to be defined by the tradition of pluralist individualism: everyone is an individual, every individual is different, and diversity in education is about bringing together individuals with different kinds of backgrounds, aptitudes, talents, and gifts. The second was "racial diversity," used as a synonym for what used to be called affirmative action or equal opportunity. Here diversity seems to be defined with respect to the tradition of civil rights and social justice, in recognition of the fact that colleges historically have been engines of social change, that racial discrimination and segregation still exists today, and that race-neutral admissions policies are not sufficient to address discrimination and segregation. The third is diversity as a skill or competency that will help students succeed in a competitive global marketplace, where it will be increasingly necessary to buy from, sell to, and work with people of differing cultural backgrounds. Here diversity seems to be defined as an educational benefit for individual students, institutions, and the broader society. These three usages certainly can be consistent, Professor Sitze observed, but they also have important differences, and sometimes they can enter into contradiction with each other. This semantic slippage is not unique to the college, he noted; it is something that Amherst shares with many institutions that are trying to respond to and navigate recent Supreme Court decisions on race conscious admissions. But he does think that it is in play in the way we talk about diversity at the college, and he also thinks it is worthy of thought.

President Martin commented that some definitions focus on individual rights and freedoms, while others emphasize the educational benefits that diversity and inclusion bring to everyone. Some address the need to redress past and current inequities and other "wrongs." President Martin favors putting all of these arguments forward; she sees value in having more than one definition of diversity and inclusion. Professor Moss stressed the importance of having a definition that encompasses both diversity and inclusion, placing equal emphasis on both, since they are related at a fundamental level. She also urged that any definition of inclusion encompass members of the Amherst community with disabilities, particularly in light of the college's recent and ongoing efforts to examine its own policies and practices.

President Martin noted the view of the external committee, which she shares, that the college needs to find more ways to build intellectual community. One way of doing so is through the creation of shared intellectual experiences, an approach that the Curriculum Committee is currently exploring. Professor Hansen expressed some skepticism about establishing curricular requirements to build shared intellectual experiences at Amherst. He expressed enthusiasm for less formal and more incremental approaches, such as "common reads." In this vein, Professor Hansen noted the impact of Ta-Nehisi Coates's September 13 visit to campus—including the impact on the Amherst community of experiencing Mr. Coates's

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public talk, together, as well as the conversations that have followed.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of [a document prepared by Five College Digital Humanities \(5CollDH\)](#) that is titled “The New Rigor: Recommendations for Evaluating and Supporting Digital Scholarship in the Five Colleges.” The report argues that the work of digital humanists has qualities (e.g., its iterative and collaborative nature and unusual timeline for scholarly production) that are distinct and which necessitate the creation of special mechanisms for its assessment evaluation. Professor Moss expressed concern that creating ad hoc committees to review digital work, as proposed, would result in a different kind of tenure process for a particular kind of scholarship. Such an ad hoc committee would end up playing a role in Amherst’s tenure process. Professor Van Compernelle, agreeing with Professor Moss, said that, while he appreciates the impulse to create tailored procedures, he fears that ad hoc committees would introduce an element in the evaluation of digital scholarship that would not be present in the assessment of other cases. The committee found the ways in which the ad hoc committee would function, as described in the document, to be problematic. One of the purposes of the committee, as described, would appear to be putting a candidate’s work in context, helping others to understand how an institution and those outside it value digital humanities. It was noted that such a committee, though intended to support a candidate, might have the opposite effect and could simply introduce another layer of evaluation. Professor Van Compernelle wondered what it is about the digital humanities that makes it difficult to explain. Professor Sitze noted that it might be useful to compare scholarship in the digital humanities to scholarship already being done around the college, in particular collaborative work in the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences; coding work in computer science; and medium-specific work in the departments in theatre and dance and music. Professor Hansen said that he appreciates the passionate plea being made in the document, but shares the concerns that had already been articulated. He expressed the view that, at the time of hiring, a candidate should be told what the expectations are in regard to assessment and evaluation. There is a special need for vigilance on the part of the administration to make sure that there is a good-faith, common understanding, he said. Concerns were also raised about the time demands that the type of collaborations that are inherent to digital scholarship place on library staff. The dean thanked the members for their thoughts, which she will convey to the Five-College deans and provosts and to the representatives from Five Colleges, Inc.

The meeting adjourned at 5:36 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The second meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, September 26, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with a conversation about the committee’s interest in meeting with Norm Jones, the college’s new chief diversity and inclusion officer. Dean Epstein suggested that the members identify topics around which discussion with Mr. Jones might focus. It was agreed that Professor Hart, who is a member of the Presidential Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion; Professor Sitze; and Dean Epstein, who is also a member of the task force, should meet with Mr. Jones to discuss the ways in which diversity and inclusion could be defined at the college. Following this preliminary conversation, the full Committee of Six would meet with Mr. Jones, at which time a broader conversation about defining diversity and inclusion at the college, and related matters, could take place. The dean agreed to organize a meeting to initiate the process, as described.

Continuing with her remarks, Dean Epstein informed the members that research conducted by her office suggests that the college does not have a formal policy on auditing classes. In advance of the committee’s meeting, the dean had shared with the members a proposal for such a policy, with the goal of offering clarity. Under the proposed policy, those seeking to audit a course at Amherst would be asked to obtain the permission of the faculty member teaching the course. The decision to accept an auditor would rest solely with the faculty member. Professor Hart suggested that the policy state that the faculty member would be responsible for defining and communicating the ways in which auditors could participate in the course. He said that it would also be important to include language about auditors’ adherence to the standards of the Amherst college community and suggested that auditors be advised to review the student code of conduct and related materials included on the [relevant pages of the website of the Office of Student Affairs](#). It was agreed that other details about auditing courses, including a link to the form that must be filled out by those requesting to be an auditor, should also be included in the policy. Dean Epstein said that she would incorporate Professor Hart’s suggestions and then seek feedback on the draft policy from the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP). The Committee of Six could then finalize the policy. It was agreed that no further action would be necessary to codify what has been the practice for auditing courses. The dean said that, once the audit policy is approved, her office will ask Kathleen Kilventon, the registrar, to ensure that it is included in the *Amherst College Course Catalog*. The information about auditing will also be included in the *Faculty Handbook*, and the new policy will be added to the booklet of information that Ms. Kilventon has created for new faculty. The members briefly discussed whether there should be a policy regarding students from Amherst Regional High School auditing courses. It was felt that the new policy, as described, would also apply to such students.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Hart noted that he had attended the first of two annual fall [Diversity Open Houses](#) organized by the Office of Admission. The first event was held September 24 through 26, and the second will be offered October 15 through 17. Through this program, students of color, first generation, and lower income students who are interested in Amherst are invited to campus to learn more about the college’s academic and extracurricular life. Professor Hart offered praise for the organization and substance of the program and noted that attendance had been robust. He is impressed with the brochure that the visiting students had received from the Office of Admission and suggested that it be provided to

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the faculty. Associate Dean Tobin said that she would obtain an electronic [copy of the brochure](#) and attach the document to these minutes. She also agreed to obtain hard copies of the piece for the Committee of Six. The Office of Admission has been producing the brochure in this format for three years.

Continuing with questions, Professor Hansen noted that it had come to his attention that, as part of orientation, new students had been invited to read letters written by returning students about challenges that they have faced at Amherst—and how they overcame those challenges so as to thrive personally and academically. The letters seemed to be highly effective, he has now heard anecdotally. Professor Hansen expressed the view that it would have been helpful for advisors of first-year students (and all faculty for that matter) to have had the opportunity to see the letters in advance of their meetings with advisees, enabling them to have a better understanding of the material referenced by some students. The dean agreed to discuss with Rick López, dean of new students, the idea of sharing the letters with the faculty before orientation in the future. The committee turned briefly to a personnel matter.

Turning to another topic, the dean informed the members that the CEP has asked that the Committee of Six and the faculty (through these minutes) be informed that the CEP will no longer reference the 2006 [report of the Committee on Academic Priorities \(CAP\)](#) in its communications to the faculty about the process for submitting FTE requests. The sense of the CEP is that Amherst's [2015 strategic plan](#) supersedes the CAP report, Dean Epstein explained.

The committee next had a preliminary discussion of the report of the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst, otherwise known as the “Diver II Report.” Professor Hansen asked Professor Call, a member of the special committee that had authored the document, for his thoughts about the findings. Professor Call responded that he concurs with the findings and recommendations of the report and the generally positive view of Amherst athletics that is offered. He sees the document as a helpful update on the 2002 Diver Report, which had also explored the place of athletics at the college. While the special committee has identified areas of progress, it has also noted the persistence of some vexing issues, many of them structural in nature and difficult to solve, Professor Call noted. He commented, in particular, on the challenges of building athletic teams at the college that are more demographically representative of the Amherst student body and the country, when faced with inequities related to socioeconomic status and other societal factors that contribute to having less diversity within certain sports. Efforts are being made, and more needs to be done to create a community of student-athletes that more closely resembles the college's community of non-athletes, Professor Call said. He stressed the need to think creatively, while recognizing the difficulty of aspects of the task at hand. Evidence suggests that the divide between athletes and non-athletes correlates with differences in opportunity and affluence, he noted. Professor Call expressed the view that, when the college grew from 1,600 students to 1,800 students, while the number of athletic teams remained the same, it was surprising to find that the number of student-athletes also grew by roughly the same proportion as the student body, given that there are very few walk-ons on Amherst's varsity teams.

Professor Hansen asked whether the regulations of the New England Small School Athletic Conference (NESCAC) may be inhibiting the college's ability to enhance the diversity of its teams. President Martin noted that some rules that have been put in place with good intentions by the conference, in order to limit excessive recruitment, have the effect of disadvantaging NESCAC schools when it comes to competing with the Ivy League, for example, in the

recruitment of student-athletes of color. She noted that there has been some relaxation of some of the rules that have had these kinds of unintended consequences.

Continuing the discussion, Professor Moss said that she was pleased to see that the report offers some clarification of the role that athletics plays in the admission process at Amherst. She would like even more transparency about the specific ways that the particular needs of athletic teams factor into admissions decisions. This information should be easily accessible to the faculty broadly and especially to the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA). Professors Hart and Sitze agreed. The members discussed the fact that, as Amherst's teams have become more competitive and successful, the academic qualifications of the college's student-athletes have grown stronger. The committee agreed to return to its discussion of the athletics report following a conversation with Lisa Rutherford, chief policy officer and general counsel.

Ms. Rutherford joined the meeting at 3:45 P.M. for the purpose of offering general legal advice related to the tenure process and answering questions posed by the committee. The members thanked Ms. Rutherford, and she left the meeting at 4:05 P.M.

The members returned to their conversation about the Diver II report. The committee discussed whether concerns about identifying and stigmatizing individuals and certain categories of students and the need to communicate sensitive issues with care, should inform choices about the data from the report that are shared broadly. President Martin said that she supports erring on the side of ensuring that students are not harmed in any way by the data that are provided, while conveying the information that is needed to inform discussion. Professor Sitze said that, while he thinks that it is important to be mindful of sensitivities in regard to sharing data from the report, he feels that questions can and should be asked about athletics—and that robust data can be provided—without stigmatizing students. He expressed concern about the report's dearth of raw data. Without this information, he asked how can the reader either verify the truth of the report's claims or reach independent conclusions. And if the purpose of Diver II was to update the analyses of Diver I, he continued, why did Diver II not contain updated versions of the detailed appendices contained in Diver I? Professor Hansen said that he would be uncomfortable with making data public about the academic qualifications and performance of any subset of students, including athletes. Professor Call said that the committee wanted to provide enough data to inform conversation, while remaining sensitive to information about students. Professor Moss agreed that the college must be thoughtful about the kind of information that should be made available while also prioritizing transparency.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Sitze expressed the view that the special committee should have offered more data about the topics of club sports, intramural sports, Amherst's varsity teams relative to other NESCAC schools, admission policies relative to other schools in NESCAC, Title IX compliance, and coaches' contracts and workloads. He expressed disappointment that there is no discussion of the methodology that was used to arrive at the report's conclusions about student perceptions of athletics. He noted that the report's conclusions on this topic do not appear to be supported by any systematic evidence, such as a survey, making it impossible to distinguish between fact and rumor. He also pointed out that the report is silent about the fate of a number of recommendations that were set forth in the Diver I report. Professor Sitze furthermore commented that the report argues against itself and at times presents contradictory statements. On one hand, the report speaks of perceptions of a divide between students who are involved in athletics and students who are not. It refers to a possibly amplified sense among students that there is a divide. On the other hand, in Professor Sitze's

view, the report speaks not of a perceived or apparent divide, but of a real and actual divide. Continuing his comments, Professor Sitze said that he is not convinced that the report can guide faculty decision-making on a number of issues relating to athletics, among them Title IX. President Martin responded that it is the administration's responsibility to ensure that Amherst is in compliance with Title IX.

Professor Hart suggested that it would be beneficial to have a broader conversation about the campus climate. He said that in his experience, going back to the time in which he was a student at Amherst, success in athletics has not been universally celebrated. Instead, such success has often been viewed with some suspicion. Professor Hart has said that he had never understood the origins of these feelings. Some of Amherst's peer institutions, on the other hand, seem to have a very different, more positive culture in this regard. Professor Sitze suggested that it would be helpful for the faculty to have a conversation about the ways in which athletics is consistent with the college's mission, including its educational benefits. Among the virtues and life lessons that can be taught and learned are discipline, sacrifice, and how to work together as a team. President Martin noted that Amherst student-athletes report high satisfaction with this aspect of athletics at the college. She said she would like to see more pathways for non-athletes to gain the same benefits that athletes receive from their experiences outside the classroom, including those with coaches, advisors, cohorts, and faculty liaisons, and through team project-based work. The committee concurred.

Continuing with the discussion, Professor Sitze said that it would be helpful to gain greater clarity about where final authority for decision-making about athletics rests at the college, including in the realm of admission policy. Professor Call said that, according to NESCAC principles, the academic authority of the college is responsible for the administration of intercollegiate athletics, namely the dean of the faculty or the president. He noted the faculty's advisory role in this area and the long history of faculty conversation about the role of athletics at the college, as well as the oversight role played by governance bodies—such as FCFA, and the Committee on Education and Athletics. While commenting on the importance of the faculty's advisory role and delegated responsibilities relative to policies relating to athletics, President Martin noted that final authority for any change in the role of athletics, and in athletics policy, rests with the Board of Trustees. Professor Sitze commented that student-athletes are students first, that faculty have the responsibility to formulate standards and policies for admission, and that responsibility also rests with the faculty when it comes to ensuring the educational integrity of all students' academic experiences. Professor Hansen suggested taking the report in good faith and making efforts to meet the challenges that have been identified. Professor Moss expressed gratitude to the special committee for its efforts and said that she is impressed with the depth of the special committee's treatment of a number of topics. The other committee members added their thanks.

Professor Sitze next expressed doubts about the report's treatment of the topic of reporting sub concussive events, arguing that the question at hand should be whether sponsoring activities that are known to cause brain damage is consistent with the mission of an institution of higher learning. The report, in his view, does not go far enough in its inquiry into this important topic. The committee discussed convening a panel of medical experts at Amherst as soon as possible, and perhaps inviting representatives from another NESCAC institution to participate, to consider the issue of concussions and athletics. Professor Hart noted that he is aware of [a similar event that was held at Williams](#) in 2011, which had been sponsored by that college and NESCAC and which had been informative. The committee, the president, and the dean expressed enthusiasm

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for having Amherst play a leadership role in bringing to fore the important issue of the long-term neurological effects of high-impact head trauma, and the consideration of policies to preserve the health and safety of student-athletes. President Martin said that she would initiate efforts to move forward with the panel. The members agreed to continue their discussion of the report at the committee's next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

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The third meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, October 3, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with the dean informing the members that she had shared the proposed policy for auditing courses at Amherst with the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), which had supported it. The Committee of Six then approved [the audit policy](#).

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Sitze thanked President Martin, Director of Athletics Faulstick, and Coach Mills for their unequivocal support for Amherst students’ right to free expression, referring to members of the college’s football team who had gone down on one knee and/or had raised their fists in protest during the playing of the national anthem at the September 24 football game against Hamilton. President Martin, Mr. Faulstick, and Mr. Mills issued statements after the game, which appeared in a September 29 piece in the [Daily Hampshire Gazette](#).

Continuing with “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Hart asked President Martin if she could provide the committee with more information about an incident that had occurred the preceding weekend. Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, had sent [an email on September 29](#) to the college community about the situation, noting that “interactions among students on campus and the description on social media occasioned concerns about bias and disrespectful interactions in our community.” She wrote, she said, to “provide information about how the college responds to incidents of bias and disrespect for people in our community.” President Martin noted that more information could not be provided to the community because of the need to preserve the privacy of individual students. She discussed the incident with the committee.

Commenting that he had read an article in the *Amherst Student* that had cited admission statistics for the children of Amherst alumni in the incoming class, Professor Hart asked the president if the report had been accurate. President Martin said that she would consult with Katie Fretwell, dean of admission and financial aid, and inform the committee of her findings.

Discussion turned to the topic of building a more diverse faculty at the college. Prior to the meeting, Dean Epstein had shared with the members drafts of a series of informational emails that she intends to send soon to inform the faculty about approaches and initiatives that will support recruitment efforts. The dean invited the committee’s feedback on the documents and said that she would also ask the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) to offer its advice about these materials.

Conversation turned briefly to the report of the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst, otherwise known as the “Diver II Report.” President Martin suggested that relevant faculty governance committees and academic units be asked to consider the report’s recommendations as a first step. The members decided to discuss at an upcoming meeting the specifics of how the report will be considered. It was agreed that when recommendations are accepted, ways should be found to hold the Department of Athletics accountable for implementing the report’s recommendations, for which the department has expressed support, and for measuring success.

Since the report had not yet been distributed, the president and the committee discussed whether some data should be removed when it is shared with the faculty via the committee’s minutes in the coming weeks, while noting that committees such as the Committee on Education and Athletics and the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA) should be

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provided with all of the data. Professor Hansen cautioned against sharing broadly academic data that is specific to the performance of student-athletes, just as he would caution against sharing academic data pertaining to any other subgroup of students at the college.

At the request of Professor Sitze, “The Role of the Faculty in the Governance of College Athletics,” [a report of the Special Committee on Athletics](#), established by the Executive Committee of the Council of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), had been shared with the committee prior to the meeting. President Martin commented that the AAUP document was clearly aimed at problems in Division I athletics, but is also important for Amherst’s purposes. The president noted that Amherst meets the AAUP criteria though the faculty governance structures of the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid and the Committee on Education and Athletics.

Professor Sitze mentioned the AAUP’s statement about the importance of full disclosure about athletic programs, saying that, while Amherst certainly should not disclose information about individual students, effective shared governance over athletics requires that full disclosure be the college’s institutional norm. Noting that, in October 2002, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Tom Parker had presented the faculty with confidential information about various student subgroups, including athletic admits, he asked whether robust data could be presented at an upcoming faculty meeting, commenting that he is particularly interested in learning more about the demographic breakdown of athletic admits. He wondered whether this category is being used to increase diversity within the student body. Professor Sitze said that he also wants to learn more about efforts to diversify the coaching staff. Professor Call suggested that Dean Fretwell be asked to give a presentation at a faculty meeting after the Diver II Report has been discussed with the governance committees. He said that the data could prove reassuring to faculty who have concerns about the role of athletics in the admission process. The members agreed that such a presentation would be welcome.

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

Amended October 21, 2016

The fourth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Thursday, October 6, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The majority of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The dean informed the committee that, for a variety of reasons, the college has begun to make more hires at the ranks of associate and full professor, with tenure. During her time as dean, she has observed that some faculty governance committees are uncomfortable with the process that is currently being use to bring these new colleagues to Amherst. She also has concerns, she noted. The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) has been reluctant, at times, to authorize senior or open-rank searches, Dean Epstein said. Continuing, she noted that the CEP has raised the question of whether scholar-teachers who have spent their careers at other institutions may face difficulties adjusting to Amherst’s culture. Members of the Committee of Six have expressed concerns about the tenure evaluation process for senior hires—including the compressed timeframe and the appointment of an ad hoc committee, made up largely of colleagues outside the department, to make the tenure recommendation.

Continuing the conversation, the dean said that, at present, the college concludes negotiations with a senior hire in March or April and runs an expedited tenure review process so that the new colleague may arrive on campus as a tenured faculty member on July 1. This process presents challenges, the dean noted. Departments, ad hoc committees, candidates, the dean’s office, and the Committee of Six need to do their work under intense time pressure, often without full information. There is frequently a scramble to assemble materials, to identify and solicit external reviewers, to make assessments, and to draft recommendations. Continuing the dean noted that departments and ad hoc committees sometimes lack clarity about their roles, and members of ad hoc committees can feel uncomfortable evaluating the dossiers of scholars who work in fields far outside their own. Members of the Committee of Six would, at times, like to have more information to inform their decision-making.

Dean Epstein informed the members that over the summer, she had contacted colleagues at liberal arts colleges and R1 universities that claim a special commitment to undergraduate teaching. These institutions do not make use of an expedited tenure process. The liberal arts colleges generally require senior colleagues to teach for a year prior to a regular tenure review. The R1 universities do bring colleagues to campus with tenure, but this is usually after protracted negotiations and regular tenure proceedings that take place while the senior hire is still at his/her other institution. In some cases, senior hires begin their new jobs as visiting professors while tenure proceedings are ongoing, Dean Epstein said.

The dean explained that, perhaps, the most interesting conversation she had had was with a dean at a peer institution. That school has language in its faculty handbook that precludes hiring anyone with tenure. The dean at the peer school has made roughly fifteen senior hires in the past five years. All of these individuals came to the peer school with the understanding that they would stand for tenure in their second year there, she noted. In most cases, they were able to negotiate two years away from their previous institutions; in a few cases, they gave up their

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tenured position prior to knowing the peer school's tenure decision. The peer school has tenured every one of these senior hires, Dean Epstein said.

Dean Epstein noted that, instead of running an expedited tenure process, she would like to propose that senior hires normally come to Amherst as visiting professors and then come up for tenure in their second year at the college. In her view, this approach would benefit everyone. Newly hired senior colleagues would be able to experience teaching at the college before deciding whether they would like to stay at Amherst on a permanent basis. Amherst would be able to make informed tenure decisions, based in part on the new colleague's classroom and service record at Amherst. The CEP is very enthusiastic about the proposal, Dean Epstein said. The dean noted that making this change would likely involve bringing a proposal to the faculty to revise the [*Faculty Handbook*](#) language (III., B.).

Professor Moss asked whether requiring all potential senior hires, with tenure, to have visiting appointments at Amherst before coming up for tenure might present roadblocks to recruitment in some cases, constricting the flexibility that currently exists in the hiring process. For example, she would worry about the impact on the program that will bring five new FTEs to the college to further diversify the faculty. While he expressed support for the procedure that Dean Epstein had outlined when the circumstances of a particular hire would allow it, Professor Call agreed strongly with Professor Moss that the dean should retain the ability to make senior hires without requiring the individual to have a visiting appointment at Amherst first. Professor Van Compernelle concurred. Professor Hansen expressed the view that the proposal would serve Amherst, but that it might not serve the person whom the college is seeking to hire. He too urged that the dean retain the ability to make senior hires with and without a visiting appointment. The dean said that she is open to maintaining flexibility. She noted that, if a senior hire is not asked to have a visiting appointment, it would still be helpful to adopt a different schedule for the tenure review, perhaps in the fall that follows a spring hire. With the hour growing late, the members decided to continue their discussion of the dean's proposal at their next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

Amended October 28, 2016

The fifth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, October 17, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Lisa Stoffer, substitute recorder.

Under “Topics of the Day,” President Martin offered a brief summary of the previous weekend’s meetings of the Board of Trustees. The president noted that students had led tours of the new greenway residence halls for the trustees, who had spent some time with the project’s architects as well. Some members of the board had also had impromptu conversations with students who are living in the dorms, who offered positive impressions of their experience. President Martin informed the committee that the trustees had discussed matters relating to the comprehensive campaign and the college’s budget. Endowments are down everywhere and may remain flat for as many as five more years; budgetary discipline is important, as is the fundraising campaign, the president commented. She reported that the board emphasized its sense that current financial pressures should help, not hurt, fundraising efforts. The trustees were impressed by the accomplishments of faculty, the new Teaching and Learning Collaborative, and other initiatives.

Following up on Professor Hansen’s request, the dean’s office asked Rick López, dean of new students, if letters that had been shared with incoming students as part of a college health and wellness initiative could be provided to the faculty prior to orientation next year. Dean López said that he would be happy to share with the faculty these letters, which had been authored by Amherst students to describe their experiences at the college. Dean Epstein provided the members with [information about the initiative](#). She said that it is her understanding that new letters will be solicited each year to aid students in their transition to Amherst.

In response to Professor Hart’s previous inquiry, Katie Fretwell, dean of admission and financial aid, provided to the committee data on the admission, acceptance, and matriculation rates of incoming students who have alumni parents. Two articles appearing in the *Amherst Student* had given the impression that there has been a significant uptick in the number of legacy students matriculating in the class of 2020. The data from admission suggest a slightly higher overall matriculation rate, but one that is well within the bounds established in the last four years, the information provided by Dean Fretwell indicated. The committee turned to personnel matters.

Discussion returned to the topic of building a more diverse faculty at the college. Prior to the meeting, Dean Epstein had shared with the members revised drafts of the series of informational emails that would be sent to inform the faculty about approaches and initiatives that will support recruitment efforts. The committee had offered feedback on these documents, which the dean incorporated into the current drafts, at its October 3 meeting. Dean Epstein asked the members if they had further suggestions. The dean said that the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) feels strongly that it should issue the email that focuses on the process for allocating the five new FTEs that were approved by the Board of Trustees to support strategic

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initiatives. Professor Moss commented that she would be happy to see the email come from the CEP.

Continuing the discussion, Professor Call asked whether target-of-opportunity hiring through regular searches will still be available, or is that option now precluded by the recruitment process described for the Five New FTE Program? Dean Epstein responded that the five new FTEs must be hired through specific, targeted outreach and recruitment and not through a search.

Thus, target-of-opportunity hires cannot be made through this program, she emphasized, however, that for approved searches, the normal procedure for target-of-opportunity hiring still applies. The dean stressed that regular searches remain separate from the Five New FTE Program.

Citing a recent experience in mathematics, Professor Call noted that large searches seem most likely to yield demographically diverse candidates. President Martin clarified further that the Five New FTE Program is not intended to ensure all diversity within the faculty, but to provide additional ways to recruit diverse candidates. Professor Hansen asked whether a Latinx hire could be an international scholar. President Martin replied that the goal is to emphasize U.S. scholars, though she acknowledged the complexity of this question with respect to Latin American scholars. Professor Hansen said he disagreed with the narrowing of the focus of the Five New FTE Program to only African American and Latinx hires and advocated that the goal of the program should be the recruitment broadly of faculty of color. President Martin said that too broad a focus for so few lines may not yield the desired results. Dean Epstein said that she would edit the emails further and send the first out this week, with the relevant attachment. She explained that she would forward the edited email about the Five New FTE Program to the CEP. ([The emails were later sent and are attached here.](#))

Conversation turned to “The Report on the Place of Athletics at Amherst.” (See link to the report and associated documents at the end of these minutes.) President Martin returned to the discussion from earlier meetings in which some expressed the view that, for the public distribution of the report, it is appropriate to remove data points about any specific group of students. Professor Call suggested that these data be provided to specific committees; it seems unnecessary to hide the information, he noted, since the data were generally positive. President Martin said she does not wish to treat athletes any differently from other students. Individual faculty and committees could request the detailed data from the Office of Institutional Research, she noted.

Professor Sitze observed that there are two precedents for the inclusion of data in this report—first, the original Diver Report, which was very detailed, and second, an admission report prepared by former Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Tom Parker in 2002, which also contained sensitive information. Professor Sitze said that full disclosure should be the norm, except for individual student information. He argued that the college should clarify the nature of holistic admission practices to help debunk the belief that admission decisions are based on “pure merit” with “special exceptions.” It is important, he said, to give the faculty the opportunity to see and discuss what the college is doing.

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President Martin acknowledged that Deans Parker and Fretwell have made more data available in the past, but only to faculty. She expressed concern about the potential impact on other audiences, given the board's stated opposition to sharing information about any defined student group. Professor Sitze asked whether the redacted data could be shared with the faculty using a slide when the report is presented to the faculty. President Martin said she would favor that approach and that this would be a good compromise, noting that in a small community, data could sometimes reveal information about specific students. This information could be shared with care with faculty, but should be removed for broader circulation. Professor Sitze requested that an un-redacted copy of the report be deposited in the college archives.

Professor Call asked whether it is clear which committees should receive which data. President Martin suggested that she send a note to the Committee on Education and Athletics, that admission data be shared with the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA), and that otherwise, the recommendations contained in the report indicate future actions. Professor Hansen noted that, for skeptical alumni, it will be important to stress that the report in no way advocates eliminating athletics but rather seeks to identify ways to strengthen athletics. The president added that the college should think more about practices and approaches in athletics that might benefit all students. President Martin said that, after data that various members had requested be removed from the public version of [the report, it will be circulated via these minutes, along with a memo from her and a response from Don Faulstick, director of athletics.](#) The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

Amended October 28, 2016

The sixth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, October 24, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Professor Griffiths, substitute recorder.

Under “Topics of the Day,” President Martin spoke briefly about her recent trip to California to talk with alumni. Dean Epstein informed the members that Amherst will participate in a COACHE (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education) survey of all faculty this spring. Those organizing the survey suggest that the college form a team of five or six individuals to inform the faculty about the instrument. The more faculty know about the survey, the more likely it will be that they will participate. In addition to the dean, the team will include Jesse Barba, director of the Office Institutional Research; Norm Jones, chief diversity and inclusion officer; an untenured member of the Amherst faculty; a lecturer at the college; a full professor who is in her or his early years in this rank at Amherst; and a faculty member of color at the college. A research-practice partnership, COACHE is based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. In addition to offering faculty surveys and robust analysis, COACHE brings its partners together to advance mutual goals of maximizing the impact of the data it gathers. Under COACHE, academic leaders at a wide range of institutions have strengthened their capacity to identify the indicators of faculty success and to implement informed changes. The committee then turned to personnel matters.

The members returned to a conversation begun on October 6, 2016, concerning procedures for hires at the ranks of associate and full professor with tenure. The dean noted that current [Faculty Handbook procedures](#) for visiting appointments (III., B.) exclude the use of such appointments for recruitment; they also create a barrier in other instances when converting a visiting appointment to a tenure-track appointment without a search may represent an important opportunity for the college. Dean Epstein proposed revised language for *the Faculty Handbook* (III., B.) that would allow a measure of flexibility, while affirming the college’s commitment to national searches when making tenure-track appointments. The members discussed how that balance could best be articulated. Agreeing that some latitude is needed, Professor Call emphasized the need to avoid misunderstandings about the long-term prospects for visiting faculty, such as have proved to be a problem in the past. Professor Sitze agreed, saying that ambiguity should be avoided as much as possible in the new policy, and that any exception to the norm should be clearly delineated as an exception. Professor Moss noted that spousal hires are a particularly sensitive matter in recruitment and retention. Professor Hansen pointed out that, given the necessary limits of handbook language, it is in letters of appointment that the terms of visiting appointments need to be made explicit. President Martin agreed that this is good practice. After a full discussion, the committee settled on the following language:

~~Visiting appointments are understood to be terminal when made; they may be for varying lengths of time dependent upon the particular circumstances.~~ The terms of a **terminal VISITING** appointment will be made explicit in writing at

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the time of appointment. In cases where ~~an~~ A VISITING appointment has been made ~~AND to a position announced on an explicitly temporary or special basis and is therefore a terminal appointment, and a decision is made to create~~ a regular position HAS BEEN CREATED in the same discipline or department, A NEW SEARCH WILL BE CONDUCTED IN ALL BUT

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES. The person who holds the temporary appointment may be a candidate for the regular position, but only as one applicant in a regular applicant pool. The college is committed to public notification of vacancies for ~~visiting~~ appointments and to ~~CONDUCTING a~~ searchES for the best available candidates ~~within affirmative action~~ guidelines.

The committee then voted six in favor and none opposed on the substance of the motion that the faculty adopt the revised statement and include it in the *Faculty Handbook (III., B.)* and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the motion the motion to the faculty. The members then voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward the faculty meeting agenda for a meeting on November 1, 2016, to the faculty.

In preparation for a future discussion of the dean's proposal concerning the compensation of department and program chairs, Professor Moss requested clarification about what feedback the members should be providing and about what the current policies are.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

Amended November 11, 2016

The seventh meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, October 31, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under “Topics of the Day,” President Martin commented that Family Weekend, which had concluded the day before, had been a successful series of events. Following up on the Committee of Six’s recent recommendation, the president informed the members of her plans to raise at an upcoming meeting of the NESCAC (New England Small College Athletic Conference) presidents the idea of organizing a panel of experts to consider the issue of concussions. She intends to ask if other presidents would like to join Amherst in this effort. The committee then turned briefly to a personnel matter.

Dean Epstein then asked for the members’ views on whether she should invite the faculty, particularly colleagues on the tenure track, to share with her the names of committees on which they would be interested in serving. She noted that this idea had arisen during a conversation that she had had recently with Professors Sitze and George, who had met with her to discuss ways in which to better introduce tenure-track faculty to faculty governance at the college, and to encourage their participation. Professor Sitze commented that having greater transparency about faculty governance would aid this effort and mitigate cynicism. The more that untenured faculty can play a role in governance, he said, the more the “curtain would be lifted” on the procedures by which questions are raised, framed, considered, and decided at the college. Dean Epstein noted that, if this invitation were to be extended, there would not be a guarantee that individuals would be appointed to the committees that they identify; the Committee of Six could consider the preferences expressed by those colleagues who share this information, however. Professor Hansen commented that, in the past, there had been an institutional sense that untenured faculty members, whenever possible, should be protected from college-wide committee service. The dean said that her understanding is that tenure-track faculty are in fact asked to serve on college-wide committees, but on those that are not particularly onerous. Professor Call suggested that the dean share with tenure-track faculty members a list of committees on which untenured colleagues have served in the past. If an individual is interested in a committee, he or she could inform the chair of the department. The members agreed that this would be a helpful approach. The dean said that, at the faculty meeting the next day, she would invite colleagues to consider providing their preferences about committee service, while reiterating that the Committee of Six would make final appointments, taking this information into account.

Continuing her remarks, Dean Epstein informed the committee that a pilot program will be under way for the next four years that will bring five fellows to the Center for Humanistic Inquiry (CHI) for two-year appointments, a move away from the current model of one-year positions. The Copeland Colloquium Program will be suspended during this period. The dean explained that having Copeland Fellows and CHI Fellows on campus concurrently, which results in a significant number of visitors of this kind, does not seem to be the best use of college resources. In her view, it seems worth experimenting with a new model that would not bring

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CHI postdocs to Amherst to teach in specific departments, but rather to hire these colleagues without a departmental affiliation. The new model has the support of the CHI's advisory committee. Once the fellows are on campus, departments could be asked if they would be interested in having them teach. Copeland Fellows normally do not teach during their time at Amherst, the dean reminded the members. She noted, in addition, that the solicitation of Copeland themes has not generated very many proposals in recent years. The dean said that she is open to suggestions about other ways of structuring appointments and themes in the future, and that she welcomes faculty proposals.

Dean Epstein noted that next year's CHI theme, which is called "Speech/Image/Spectacle," will focus on contemporary public discourse. She agreed to share more information about the theme with the members at the next meeting of the Committee of Six. Professor Hart wondered if the CHI might become a clearing house and hub for visitors who do not have formal departmental affiliations and whom Amherst hosts for a relatively brief period, or for more extended periods. He offered as an example, individuals who come to the college through the Harold Wade, Jr. Memorial Fund Fellowships Program. The dean expressed support for this proposal, while noting that office space might prove to be a problem. President Martin suggested appointing at least one senior CHI Fellow in each cohort. She believes that doing so would have the effect of enlivening the intellectual environment and drawing scholars at earlier stages of their careers to the center, for whom the senior colleague could serve as a mentor. The committee and the dean found this idea to be intriguing, and Dean Epstein said that she would speak with Martha Umphrey, the center's director, about the proposal.

The dean informed the members that Lauren Tuiskula '17, current editor of the *Amherst Student*, had written to request that her successor as editor, Jingwen Zhang '18, be allowed to attend the faculty meeting on November 1. Ms. Zhang, who is currently the student newspaper's head managing news editor, will assume her new role this spring, Dean Epstein explained. The members agreed to grant this request, noting that Ms. Zhang should be informed that she will be an invited guest under the same provisions that govern the editor of the newspaper. (The editor-in-chief and the publisher of the *Amherst Student* are invited guests at faculty meetings for purposes of information; see Faculty Handbook, IV., R., b.)

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Moss asked about the status of forming a committee to address issues of accessibility at Amherst. The dean said that the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force has been discussing how best to consider this topic. Professor Moss hopes that the issue of accessibility would not be subordinated to other work that is being undertaken by the task force, a group that has a focus on diversity and inclusion as an overall matter, she noted. The dean said that she will speak with members of the task force and would report back to the committee about the approach that the task force envisions taking to address the issue of accessibility. Professor Hart next asked if there has been a change in the college's work-study policy for off campus sites. The dean said that she would make inquiries and report back to the committee about this topic as well.

Returning to the question of how best to encourage faculty to participate in the COACHE (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education) survey of all faculty this spring, the

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dean said that she has had second thoughts about creating a committee to inform the faculty about the instrument. She wondered if simply providing an incentive might be helpful. Professor Sitze suggested that an incentive should not be necessary, since participation in the survey is important to faculty members themselves, and to the institution. The other members agreed, and the decision was made not to form a committee and not to offer an incentive. Professor Hart asked if the consultative body for tenure-track faculty has been consulted about the survey. The dean said that the group is reviewing the questions on the survey and is considering whether it would be helpful to add questions that might be particularly relevant for untenured colleagues. Professor Van Compernelle asked what the response rate had been the last time that the survey had been administered. The dean responded that 66 percent of faculty had responded to the survey.

Conversation turned to a proposal to compensate chairs of academic departments and programs, which the dean had brought forward for discussion. Dean Epstein explained that she sees the proposal as a high priority, and that she has discussed her ideas with small groups of faculty at *On Amherst's Plate* governance lunches and at meetings with chairs. Chairing, in the dean's view, has become increasingly burdensome, especially due to the new wave of faculty hiring and the presence of more staff in instructional positions. She noted that Amherst is among the last of the liberal arts colleges that do not compensate their chairs. The college is also unusual in its frequent rotation of chairs; most liberal arts colleges are moving to a standard three-year term, the dean said, and she advocates this approach. Under Dean Epstein's proposal, chairs would have a one-term limit. In exceptional circumstances, she said that chairs might be asked to serve a fourth year (depending on the leave patterns of other colleagues).

Continuing, Dean Epstein expressed the view that strengthening the role of chairs would help Amherst to accomplish institutional priorities. Attendance at regular (usually monthly) meetings during the semester would be required. In these meetings, chairs would learn about best practices in mentoring untenured faculty, hiring diverse candidates, leading conversations around curricular change, and working with staff members. In addition, monthly meetings would facilitate ongoing communication between the dean and chairs, benefiting both the faculty and the administration. Information about ongoing initiatives would be shared, and feedback would be solicited. The dean discussed with the members a number of possible options for compensating chairs, including additional leave and annual stipends.

Dean Epstein explained that the faculty with whom she has spoken about the proposal have seen pros and cons, while expressing support for the idea of compensating chairs. Some have expressed some concern that, if the chair is compensated, other faculty will not help the chair with the administrative work of the department. The dean said that she does not anticipate this scenario occurring often, as colleagues would find that they would be doing all the work themselves when they became chair. Some faculty in small departments have argued that additional leaves could pose problems, if this form of compensation were to be offered. Professor Van Compernelle wondered what the effect would be, particularly in small departments, of additional leaves piling up, if chairs were given additional leaves.

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Generally, the committee was in favor of the spirit of the dean's proposal, while raising concerns about some of the details. Professor Call asked the dean if it is her intention to have all departments conform to the plan. She responded that it is. Professor Hansen, who was supportive of the dean's ideas overall, suggested that there should be some flexibility—for example, a chair might be appointed for just two years, depending on the departmental leave schedule. He also expressed the view that the idea of compensating chairs of major faculty committees, currently a part of the plan, should be considered as a separate matter. The dean agreed.

Continuing the discussion of the plan, Dean Epstein said that, in formulating the proposal, she had tried to create some flexibility, developing a number of different options for compensation; colleagues may have different needs at different stages of their careers and in their personal lives, she noted. Professor Moss expressed concern with one component of the proposal that reserved course release only for chairs of larger departments. Such a policy, she noted, could have unintended and potentially negative consequences. It could, for example, create divisions among small and large departments. It might increase the administrative work for some colleagues without providing the time necessary to fulfill these added responsibilities. Such a system could also be perceived as inequitable. For example, members of small and medium-sized departments are often jointly appointed. As such, they may chair more frequently than colleagues with a single appointment or those in larger departments, and yet they would not have the option of course release. She wondered if their research productivity might be disproportionately affected by this new system. She also wondered if members of smaller and medium-sized departments, especially "studies" departments, are disproportionately faculty of color. These colleagues, she believes, already assume a sizable share of service responsibilities, including committee work and advising.

The president and the dean suggested that, under any new system, ways would need to be found to recognize and compensate the work of larger and smaller departments, and that some "line" would need to be drawn for the sake of equity. Doing so would not suggest that some units are less well regarded than others, they noted. Chairs of science departments, for example, typically work over the summer and should be compensated accordingly, the dean commented. Professor Sitze agreed that chairs of science departments are particularly burdened. He noted that chairing the music department appears to be of the same order. The dean agreed and said that she believes that chairs of music and large science departments should receive regular compensation that is proportional to the work that they do.

Professor Hansen expressed the view that the size of a department, in and of itself, does not necessarily correlate to the workload of the chair. Mentoring tenure-track faculty, preparing personnel cases, and coordinating searches are the most time-consuming tasks, whether a department is large or small, he continued. Other members agreed. The dean noted that administrative work relating to the number of staff in a department also can be a large responsibility for the chair, according to what she has heard. Professor Van Compernelle noted that in language departments, in particular, the work of observing the teaching of lecturers and reviewing them for reappointment is significant.

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The members discussed the level at which a stipend should be set for chairs to encourage some colleagues to choose a stipend over a course release, as it would be problematic to lose too many courses to course release, if this option were to be offered. The dean noted that, under a system of course release, course replacements for faculty on leave would not be provided unless a department made a compelling curricular argument. Professor Sitze asked if small departments with collaborative governance would be allowed to opt out of the three-year term. In his own department, rotating the chair each year works very well. He feels that making a change to a three-year term would be undesirable. President Martin noted that academic department coordinators (ADC)s have shared with the administration concerns about the need to educate new chairs on a continual basis at present, which places a significant burden on the ADCs. This structural problem is a source of significant employee unhappiness, which should be considered, the president said.

Professor Call expressed the view that the spirit of the proposal is positive and said that he understands the desire to find ways to enable chairs to become better informed about the work and policies of the college. On the other hand, while chairs would be compensated under the proposal, more would be asked of them as well. The dean said that there are good reasons for asking chairs to do more and to be compensated for their efforts. Professor Call asked if, under the plan, chairs could “bank” course releases, should this form of compensation be offered, and whether accumulating two releases could be converted into a semester leave. The dean said that “banking” would not be permitted, if course release becomes an option. Professor Call asked if the cost of the program, which the dean had noted would be approximately \$250,000, would be a new budget allocation. The dean said that this would be the case.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Van Compernelle said that he too supports the spirit of the proposal, but has concerns about equity that echo those of Professor Moss. He argued that chairs of small departments may face tremendous burdens during particular years, for example when there are personnel cases and searches. Trying to solve problems of time with money does not make sense to him. He favors reducing what is asked of chairs and/or providing course release. The dean reiterated that some faculty would prefer a stipend to a leave. Professor Van Compernelle expressed the view that faculty can only do their best work on committees and as chair if they are given time. He worries that research momentum would be lost if the compensation for serving as a chair for three years was a leave at the conclusion of that period, one possibility that was under discussion.

Some members wondered whether the price of compensating chairs with course release and additional leave would be too high. Most members felt that it might be best to offer all chairs compensation in the form of a stipend. The committee suggested that compensation could be tied to the work of preparing personnel cases, undertaking searches, and mentoring untenured faculty. Professor Sitze wondered if, rather than having a rigid system, compensation in regard to course release, in particular, could be reserved for chairs who have unusually burdensome administrative responsibilities, and be given at the discretion of the dean. Dean Epstein said that she would prefer to put a system in place that would not rely on the dean’s discretion. A point

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system might be one option, with points given for personnel cases, searches, the size of a department, advising that falls disproportionately to faculty of color, etc., she suggested.

The members discussed the potential challenges of granting course release, with the potential of having to replace more than thirty courses (since, at present, Amherst has thirty-three departments and programs). The dean said that she anticipates that some colleagues would choose monetary compensation over course release, if course release were available, and that the number of courses needing to be replaced in any given year might in fact be around sixteen. Professor Call noted, on a practical level, that finding replacements for this number of courses would mean taking a significant number of tenure-line faculty out of the classroom and replacing them with single-course “borrows.” President Martin, who said that she supports compensating chairs, commented that the Board of Trustees would likely not be in favor of granting a significant number of course releases and taking Amherst faculty out of the classroom. Professor Hansen suggested that the president discuss the issues that had been raised in this conversation with the board before any proposal for compensating chairs is brought to the faculty. If the trustees are not supportive, it may not be productive to bring forward a proposal, particularly involving course release as an option, in his view. President Martin said that she would be happy to raise this topic with the board. She also suggested that the level of the annual stipend for chairs should be meaningful from a financial perspective.

The dean thanked the members for their comments and the excellent points raised and said that she would revise the proposal and share a new version with the committee at a future meeting. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

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The eighth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, November 7, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under “Topics of the Day,” Dean Epstein asked for the members’ views on the possibility of the college participating in a new venture that is being developed by Jonathan Soros, who has invited several peer schools to take part as well. The program would bring to campus retired United States Army officers with Ph.D.s and/or other advanced degrees to teach for a limited period. In advance of inviting an individual to Amherst, the college would receive CVs, course proposals, and other materials for the participants in the program, all of whom would have retired from the military within the previous twelve months. The dean’s office would forward the information to relevant departments. The program is designed to assist in building relationships and understanding between the United States Army and civilian institutions, to contribute to the richness and diversity of students’ educational experiences, and to facilitate officers’ transition into civilian life. Departments could choose, if they wish, to host the individuals as visitors who would teach two courses a semester during a year in residence at Amherst. Professor Hansen noted that the United States Army is one of most diverse organizations in the world, and he expressed enthusiasm for the proposal to bring former officers to campus to teach. Professor Call also expressed support, with the caveat that there is assurance there will be a departmental host for each visitor. The other members shared this view. Professor Moss asked if the program is meant to attract candidates exclusively from the army and not any other branch of the service. The dean confirmed that this program would apply to the army only.

Continuing with her remarks, the dean explained that the president would be traveling for the college on November 15, which is currently being held for a possible faculty meeting. The members agreed that there should not be a faculty meeting on that date, and that the faculty should be informed. Discussion turned briefly to the faculty meeting that had been held on November 1, during which some members of the faculty had asked for data to inform a future discussion about “The Place of Athletics at Amherst College: Revisiting the Diver II Report,” the recently distributed report of the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst. It was agreed that the 2002 report on athletics, “The Place of Athletics at Amherst College: A Question of Balance,” the “Diver I” report, should be re-sent to the faculty (it had been provided to the faculty and administration in 2014 as an attachment to the Committee of Six minutes of March 10, 2014). The members agreed that, to meet the faculty’s request for more information, the Office of Institutional Research should be asked to update the data in the 2002 report. The dean said that she would ask Jesse Barba, director of the Office of Institutional Research, to gather data to update Appendix B, the size of sports rosters; Appendix C, the size of the rosters and the number of contests per year for each sport; Appendix D, the number of teams and the size of coaching and support staff for NESCAC (New England Small College Athletic Conference) schools; and Appendix E, the win-loss records of each team. Appendix A is the charge of the

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committee, Dean Epstein noted. Some of this information had been provided to the “Diver II” committee earlier, she said.

Professor Sitze commented that there are references to data points in the new report, but little raw data. He expressed interest in reviewing raw data, as have other faculty, he noted. Professor Sitze commented that the new report does not include an update on the recommendations of the Diver I report. In this regard, he referenced page forty-seven, recommendation A, of the Diver I report, which reads as follows:

Working with the Administration, the Office of Institutional Research should identify measureable indicators of the quality of the athletic program and the impacts that the athletic program is having on the academic program, social life, and student diversity. Those indicators should address such topics as: (1) the number of participants (total, and by gender and ethnic category) in varsity and sub-varsity sports; (2) the won-lost record of teams; the coaching resources and expenditures by team; (3) the relative academic performance of athletes (by gender and team) and non-athletes; the extent of academic over-or under-performance by athletes; (4) numbers of class and laboratory conflicts and numbers of athletes thereby affected; (5) patterns of housing concentration by athletes (by gender and team); (6) rates of academic or disciplinary infractions; alumni support and giving by former athletic participation; and (if feasible) (6) [*sic*] key indicators of time demands, personal growth and development, self-esteem, and social segregation of the sort generated by the Aries survey. The OIR should annually gather, analyze, and interpret the data necessary to specify these indicators, and report the results to the President and the Dean of the Faculty.

Professor Sitze expressed support for having greater transparency in regard to data; he argued that offering more information can help allay feelings of mistrust and suspicion. It is his hope that there can be open, honest, and respectful discussions of this topic. Professor Hansen commented that he found the lack of civility during some of the discussion at the last faculty meeting to be troubling. Other members of the committee agreed.

In anticipation of a discussion about athletics at the next faculty meeting, which would likely be held on the next available date, December 6, the members agreed that the faculty should also be provided with the sensitive data, which was limited to one chart and related language, that had been removed from the Diver II report when it was appended to the Committee of Six minutes of October 17, 2016. President Martin suggested that questions raised by some members of the faculty at the last faculty meeting could be forwarded to Professor Patrick Williamson and trustee Shirley Tilghman, co-chairs of the Diver II Committee. In this way, consideration of the issues can be as systematic and transparent as possible. Relevant faculty governance committees (the Committee on Education and Athletics and the Faculty Committee

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on Admission and Financial Aid) should also be involved in the consideration of the recommendations of the Diver II Committee. The president commented on the importance of

being in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when sharing data. It was noted that this federal law protects the privacy of student education records and applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. Professor Hansen expressed support for creating a policy on institutional data sharing, an idea proposed at the faculty meeting. In his view, such a policy would help the college move away from an ad hoc approach to making decisions about whether information should be provided, when requested, and balance concerns of transparency and privacy. President Martin agreed and said that she envisions a policy that would assume transparency, unless the college's general counsel feels that release of data would violate FERPA or other laws.

On a related note, Professor Moss asked the dean to clarify the college's new "moving wall" policy, which determines when certain archival records may be made publicly available. The dean responded that the college's Board of Trustees had voted to approve a records release policy at its October 15, 2016, meeting, and that the policy is available online. (The policy is toward the bottom of the web page.) Dean Epstein noted that, under the records release policy, access to Amherst records is restricted during the articulated timeframes, with limited exceptions. After the articulated timeframes, access is restricted only to the extent necessary to honor legal requirements and privacy considerations. The members turned briefly to a personnel matter.

In response to a question posed at the last meeting by Professor Moss about the ways in which issues of accessibility are being addressed by the college, Dean Epstein commented that it is critical that issues of accessibility be viewed and engaged as part of Amherst's institutional obligation to be inclusive. After a meeting of representatives from the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of Student Affairs, and the Office of General Counsel, it was determined that it would be best for the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force to take the lead regarding the college's efforts around accessibility. Although Amherst may ultimately determine that a separate task force is necessary (because of the amount of work associated with this topic), the current task force will identify the work that needs to be done. The task force will add the diagnostic questions around "where we are" and "what needs to be done" in its self-study report, which is due to the External Advisory Committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Excellence in March. Meanwhile, Norm Jones, chief diversity and inclusion officer, is meeting with a group of students to learn more about their needs and is also conducting an accessibility audit around faculty and staff concerns. Preliminary findings will be communicated to the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, Dean Epstein said.

The dean, as promised, provided the committee with more information about the next theme of the Center for Humanistic Inquiry (CHI). The center describes its 2017-2018 theme, titled "Speech/Image/Spectacle," as follows:

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In 1967, Guy Debord wrote in *The Society of the Spectacle*, “all that once was directly lived has become mere representation.” Fifty years later, his claim seems both remarkably trenchant and ripe for revisiting. In our boisterous world, we are

saturated in sound and image, and the boundary between life and representation has become increasingly porous. Technology has intensified our capacity to conjure and circulate speech and spectacle in ways that envelope and interrupt, entertain and offend, enlighten and obscure. In such a highly mediated context, how should we conceive the very act of communicating?

Our theme, SPEECH/IMAGE/SPECTACLE, invites inquiry into the politics, aesthetics, technologies, genealogies, and epistemologies of contemporary public discourse. Over the course of two years we will explore the ways we generate, encode, and circulate meaning through representation, inquiring after the nature and effects of speech, image, and spectacle on the senses, on human subjectivity, and on politics and sociality. We hope to engage a wide range of humanities-oriented scholarship as we take up questions addressing our theme. How should we understand shifting relations between speech (in the guise of words, languages, speech acts, free speech rights, and so on), performance, and spectacle, both now and historically? Has speech now been spectacularized? What is the relation between spectacle and identity, authenticity, or truth? How do image and spectacle translate or channel power? How should we assess calls to regulate or repress publication and circulation of troubling speech and images, or conversely to expand their scale and reach? What ways of perceiving and practicing politics does a spectacular society demand or allow? How does the very domain of representation change as the global circulation of text and image compresses space and recalibrates time?

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Sitze asked if progress is being made on priority five of the college’s strategic plan—“preparing students for increasing global interdependence by cultivating international programs and perspectives.” The dean said that she is supporting international travel experiences that are embedded in courses and is working toward forging a small number of international partnerships. The dean will be traveling to several different areas abroad to learn more about possible partners. In addition, she would like to begin a conversation on potential approaches to increasing the number of Amherst students who take foreign languages. In the dean’s view, the curriculum already has a large number of courses that have global content, but students do not always take advantage of this opportunity. In addition, she will soon meet with a group of faculty who focus their research and teaching on Africa to discuss how the study of the continent is positioned within the curriculum. She is considering bringing an external review team to the college to help her and these colleagues think strategically about this topic. Professor Van Compernelle informed the dean that a number

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of students have approached him over the years about the need to increase the number of courses that focus on Southeast Asia, as this is an area that is not well represented within the Amherst curriculum.

The members discussed a proposal brought forward from the dean, with the endorsement of the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), to appoint an Ad Hoc Faculty Committee on Student Learning. Professor Hansen asked if this new committee's work would overlap with that of the Curriculum Committee and/or might be in the purview of the Moss Quantitative Center, the writing center, and the Teaching and Learning Collaborative. He wondered how it is envisioned that this new committee would interact with these other entities, and he encouraged open and regular communication among all the committees and centers involved with student learning and support. Dean Epstein said the ad hoc committee would help launch, support, understand, and institutionalize the innovative practices and experimentation of the Teaching and Learning Collaborative, of which the writing center and quantitative center are a part. The committee then reviewed a proposed charge for the ad hoc committee and offered some suggestions to revise it. It now reads as follows:

With the goal of supporting the faculty and advancing curricular, co-curricular, and pedagogical initiatives, the Ad Hoc Faculty Committee on Student Learning examines and disseminates information and strategies, and aids in efforts that contribute to the understanding of student learning at the college. The ad hoc committee's activities include researching and reviewing best practices, with the purpose of enhancing student learning; helping to identify assessment needs and to gather and interpret data; and making proposals and recommendations. The ad hoc committee supports the work of other faculty committees, most prominently the CEP, and college departments and programs. The ad hoc committee is charged with undertaking this work for up to three years. At the conclusion of its work, the members will make a recommendation to the Committee of Six about whether a proposal to create a standing faculty committee on student learning should be brought to the faculty. The Ad Hoc committee consists of three members of the faculty distributed across the arts, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, appointed by the Committee of Six; the chair of the CEP or the chair's designee (another faculty member of the CEP); and the following ex officio members, who serve without vote—the dean of the faculty, the director of the Office of Institutional Research, the director of the Teaching and Learning Collaborative, the chief diversity and inclusion officer, and the chief student affairs officer. A faculty member will serve as the chair of the committee. The ad hoc committee selects its own chair. The dean of the faculty appoints a researcher, normally the director or a staff member of Instructional and Curricular

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Design Services, to inform and support the work of the ad hoc committee and to serve as its secretary.

Conversation turned to a proposal from the CEP to remove instructor access to transcripts and test scores through the ACDATA system. Under [the proposal](#) as described in a letter of October 1, 2016, from Professor Hall, chair of the CEP, faculty advisors would continue to have

access to transcripts and standardized test scores for their current advisees. Professor Hall notes in his letter that current policy asks instructors to supply criteria by which enrollment decisions are made at the time a course is proposed. These criteria then appear alongside the course description. In the CEP's view, Professor Hall explains, in most cases, it is sufficient to examine class year, major, and whether course prerequisites have been satisfactorily completed. A good deal of additional information is currently available to instructors through the ACDATA system, however. The CEP argues that enrollment decisions should be based primarily on the criteria enumerated in the course description. Using additional criteria runs counter to the principle of transparency that allows students to understand why they may (or may not) be cut from an overenrolled course, in the CEP's view. The dean noted that the CEP is recommending limiting the academic information that is made available to instructors through ACDATA to students' names, class years, major(s), major advisor(s), and whether the student has satisfied the prerequisites for the course. The desired result would be that ACDATA would not supply standardized test scores, unofficial transcripts, or even lists of courses taken with grades redacted. Professor Hall notes that instructors with a demonstrated need could request and receive student transcripts from the registrar, as is the case now.

The dean noted that last year's Committee of Six had discussed this proposal. Some members had supported the idea then, while others had expressed some concerns about aspects of the proposal. Dean Epstein said that it is good to keep in mind that, under FERPA regulations, automatic access to transcripts may be problematic because of privacy concerns. Arguments around equity and access have also been central to discussions about limiting automatic access to student transcripts. She noted that there have been situations in the past that have involved the misuse of transcripts—for example, taking into account student grades to determine who will be allowed in to a class. Knowledge of students' past performance can also result in some prejudgment when grading current work, the CEP believes. The importance of avoiding bias within central educational processes has been noted, as has the idea that, if transcripts continue to be available with ease, making use of past grades when creating class rosters might be more of a temptation for faculty during the roster management period of the new extended pre-registration process. As she did during the previous discussion, President Martin said that she worries about student privacy rights and about students' access to the entire curriculum and their exclusion from courses for which they have passed prerequisite classes. Professors Hansen and Call said that having easy access to students' transcripts, and the data that they contain, is essential for STEM faculty, who need to advise students on the best placements in courses and to determine the level of support that they might need. Professor Hansen stressed

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that faculty operate in good faith and make use of transcripts for a variety of educational purposes, including “informal” advising, with their students’ best interests in mind. Professor Call agreed, noting that having access to students’ transcripts with grades informs his planning of courses. It is important that he is aware of the courses that students are currently taking and those that they have taken in the past, as well as their performance in past courses as part of this work. Professor Hansen expressed concern about the additional burdens that would likely be placed on the staff in the registrar’s office if the process for gaining access to transcripts becomes more time consuming. He noted that decisions often need to be made in “real time” for students to be placed in the proper courses, and said that he can imagine that delays could be caused if the process for obtaining transcripts becomes more burdensome. The dean noted that Ms. Kilventon has developed a new option that will allow instructors from a department to view courses that students complete in that department and in other relevant departments and test scores. For example, faculty in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics would see the courses that each student has completed and his or her grades in the courses in the department, as well as SAT scores and Amherst placement test results. This information could be made available only to those departments requiring this information for placement and/or advising purposes.

The members agreed that making “gradeless transcripts” available to all faculty members during the pre-registration period is helpful. Professors Moss and Van Compernelle noted that some faculty use the information to ensure that students have met necessary prerequisites and to learn more about students’ areas of interest. Seeing the distribution of students’ courses can help faculty build a roster of students with a diversity of interests and backgrounds, in their view. Dean Epstein stressed that the criteria that will be used to select students in over-enrolled classes should be made clear in the course description. Students have expressed concern that the current process, which is not transparent to them, may be biased. They want to understand how faculty members are making their selections. Professor Sitze said that he sees the CEP’s proposal as a well-crafted piece of legislation. It establishes student privacy as the college’s institutional norm, but it also allows for exceptions that can be handled through existing organs of faculty governance. At the conclusion of the conversation, the committee expressed support for the CEP’s proposal, with two exceptions. The members would prefer that transcripts, with grades suppressed, be made available to instructors during the pre-registration period only, for students on the instructor’s class list, for the reasons described. In addition, the committee supports the view that the complete academic records of the students in a class be made readily available to instructors who have legitimate educational reasons for needing this information. The members asked Dean Epstein to convey their view to the CEP. She agreed to do so.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

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The ninth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by Dean Epstein in her office at 3:30 P.M. on Thursday, November 10, 2016. Present were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder. The purpose of the meeting was to learn about the ongoing work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Faculty Meeting Hours. The members of that committee (Jesse Barba, director of institutional research; Professor George (chair); Kathleen Kilventon, registrar; and Professors Móricz, Trapani, and Young), attended the entire meeting.

It was noted that a [proposal](#) that last year’s Committee of Six had received last spring had prompted that body to charge the ad hoc committee with exploring the feasibility of creating a weekly two-hour block during the day that could be set aside for faculty meetings and community scheduling. It had been agreed that, in general, to reduce class bunching, making fuller use of the timeslots that are available for classes would be helpful. The following is the charge to the committee:

Charge to the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Faculty Meeting Hours

The Committee of Six requests that the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Faculty Meeting Hours examine the feasibility of creating a weekly two-hour block during the day that would be set aside for faculty meetings and community scheduling—for example, campus-wide meetings and talks by speakers of interest. In developing its recommendations, the committee is asked to consult broadly with those who have the right and responsibility to attend faculty meetings; to gather information about community scheduling (aka “community hours”) at peer institutions; to study Amherst’s weekly class schedule and to propose changes, if needed; and to consider the implications for athletics, the arts, and classroom availability of all proposed timeslots. The ad hoc committee is asked to submit its findings and recommendations in a report to the Committee of Six in the fall of 2016.

Professor George began the discussion by noting that the ad hoc committee had hosted two open meetings for faculty and staff and had also met with the Association of Amherst Students (AAS) this fall, sharing [four proposals and the pros and cons of each](#). Professor Trapani noted that the ad hoc committee recently developed one additional proposal, which it has just started to consider. Professor George then reviewed each of the ad hoc committee’s proposals, noting the advantages and disadvantages of each, and the competing interests of different constituencies (e.g., the arts and athletics) that might make the proposals unworkable/unpopular. During the course of the conversation, members of the Committee of Six offered some additional proposals. The pros and cons of each were noted; it was agreed that none of these additional proposals, like those of the ad hoc committee, would come without costs to particular constituencies.

Some members of the Committee of Six wondered whether the task of finding a possible time for a daytime faculty meeting should be disentangled from the task of finding a possible time for a community hour, though it was noted that the ad hoc committee had been charged with addressing both questions. It was noted that finding a time to hold faculty meetings during the day, which some faculty would prefer, would also create space for a community hour, since the

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slot would go unused when faculty meetings were not held. Changing the time of faculty meetings to the day results in the need to find/create a two-hour block, which is not a simple matter. Professor Sitze said that he is not convinced of the necessity of regularly giving up time in the day in order to have faculty meetings, which occur six to eight times a year; he commented that he is not sure what problem is driving the desire to do so. The trade-offs—giving up time during the day that is currently used for teaching and research—associated with changing to a daytime faculty meeting do not seem worth any gains that might be imagined, in his view. Professor Call, while offering support for investigating options, stressed the need to consider the needs of departments that teach classes four days a week—Mathematics and Statistics for example. Mr. Barba noted that language departments also offer classes that meet four or five days a week.

The idea of having more frequent hour-long faculty meetings during the day was discussed as another option, as this approach could result in less of a need to change the schedule for classes and allow for a community hour. Professor Young, who favors daytime faculty meetings, found the idea of shorter, more frequent faculty meetings to be attractive. She feels that this model would help build community among faculty members, particularly those who are new to the college. The needs of families with young children were considered and discussed in relation to potential faculty meeting times. No particular conclusions about the best way to address these needs could be drawn, particularly since there is a range of opinions—even among faculty who have young children. Mr. Barba noted that surveys about faculty meeting times that have been conducted in recent years have revealed that there is not a consensus about the best time for faculty meetings. Dean Epstein commented that Amherst is an outlier among peer schools in regard to having faculty meetings in the evening. Professor Trapani, who has conducted some research in this regard, confirmed that peer institutions largely hold faculty meetings in the afternoon. In discussing the possible reasons why the college has long had faculty meetings in the evening, it was noted that it is difficult to control how timeslots for teaching are utilized during the day. The college does not require departments to make use of all time slots (resulting in “class bunching” because of the underutilization of some days and times); does not have evening classes; does not have as many required courses that all students must take, which might be scheduled at particular times that are currently underutilized, because of the open curriculum; has constraints imposed by the need to ensure that teaching times mesh with the Five-Colleges; and tries to accommodate the needs of all constituencies (e.g., the arts and athletics), rather than requiring students to make choices in this regard.

Professor Moss expressed the view that offering a rationale for a community hour and noting the benefits that such an hour would bring, should be the first matter to be addressed. If the Amherst community, and the faculty in particular, sees value in having a community hour, faculty and departments may be more willing to make the sacrifices that will be needed to create a space for this activity. Professor Hansen agreed, noting that he sees great benefits to having a time during the day that would be reserved for faculty meetings, community hours, campus-wide lectures, and department meetings. He, for one, would be open to making changes to teaching

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times, if reserving a two-hour slot for these purposes would be the result. He suggested that the ad hoc committee explicitly note the impact on the scheduling of laboratory sections when

proposing schedule changes. Most agreed that Friday afternoon is particularly underutilized for teaching. Professor Móricz commented that it is clear that most faculty members and students do not wish to make use of Friday afternoons for classes. Overall, she questioned whether there is strong interest within the Amherst community in having a community hour. Professor Van Compernelle commented that many faculty members use Friday afternoon to travel to attend conferences. It was noted that athletes often travel to athletic events at this time, as well.

At the conclusion of the conversation, the Committee of Six recommended that the ad hoc committee make a proposal for a single two-hour block during the day, other than on Friday afternoon, that could be reserved for faculty meetings, a community hour, and departmental matters. The proposal should describe changes that would be necessary in the teaching schedule to reserve the slot. The Committee of Six asked the ad hoc committee to offer substantive arguments for creating a community hour as part of the proposal. The Committee of Six would then consider the proposal of the ad hoc committee. As the meeting ended, the Committee of Six thanked the ad hoc committee for its good work.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

Amended November 30, 2016

The tenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016-2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 2:30 P.M. on Thursday, November 17, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Following up on a question posed by Professor Hart earlier about a possible change in the college's work-study policy for off campus sites, Dean Epstein reported that Gail Holt, dean of financial aid, had informed her that off-campus work-study is funded through federal funding received by the college. This funding provides great benefit to the community, Dean Holt noted, as outside placements do not need to fund the standard wage for employees/students. However, as a partnership and per the terms of the federal funding, work-study funding does not cover Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes. Usually, the outside placement pays that portion. During the period of original funding for the Center for Community Engagement (CCE), an agreement was made by the CCE to cover that match on behalf of some off-campus agencies, Dean Holt reported. Since funding and programs of the CCE are now under different leadership and budgeting, that match agreement has ended, according to Dean Holt. She informed Dean Epstein that the college has been seeking alternatives and is exploring whether these agencies can continue to benefit from students using work-study funding off-campus by providing the FICA funding. Professor Hart expressed concern that most agencies do not have the resources to absorb this cost, which will threaten student work-study placements off campus. Professor Hansen said that the college should do everything possible to provide opportunities for work-study students to contribute to the local community through placements off campus. He suggested that Amherst provide the equivalent of the FICA funding, as it had in earlier years. The dean said that she would look into whether the college can do so, while noting that the CCE's budget has been reduced. Professor Hart expressed concern that the number of Amherst students working at the ABC (A Better Chance) House through work-study funding has been reduced from ten to two, because of the policy change. He also expressed concern that students were put in the position of discussing their personal financial situation with their classmates, as a means of informing the decision about which students should be cut. The committee agreed that the situation, as described, was troubling. Dean Epstein wondered if there is a shortage of work-study jobs and whether most are on campus. Professor Hart noted that Amherst has an obligation to ensure that its students who have a work-study expectation can meet that \$1,800 obligation. The committee asked the dean to find out how FICA taxes are paid for in on-campus jobs and to learn more about the other issues that had been raised during the conversation. She said that she would pursue answers to the members' questions and report back to the committee. The members then turned briefly to a personnel matter.

The dean informed the members that she would soon announce that Professors Hart and Parham will each assume a half-time administrative appointment as faculty diversity and inclusion officer, beginning on January 1, 2017. Since Professor Hart will be a member of the administration as of that date, he will no longer be eligible to serve on the Committee of Six. After the dean reviewed the precedents for replacing members of the committee who leave before their terms are completed, the committee considered a number of options—not

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replacing Professor Hart and having five members for the spring term, running a mid-year election for a new member who would serve for a year-and-a-half, and running a mid-year election for a new member who would serve for the spring term only. After some discussion, it was agreed to run an election as soon as possible for a member to serve out Professor Hart's last semester of his two-year term, i.e., for the spring term only.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," the committee discussed the campus climate in the aftermath of the recent presidential election. The members agreed that there seems to be a strong desire for dialogue among members of the college community and an interest in gaining a greater understanding of the election and its impact. Many students, it was noted, are experiencing a range of feelings and may be in need of support. The committee encouraged President Martin to communicate with the campus community about the college's response to possible changes in American immigration laws and enforcement and to offer support to undocumented students and students with legal status under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order. President Martin said that the college will do everything it can within the limits of the law to support students and fulfill Amherst's promise of educational opportunity. She sent a letter to the community on November 20 that addressed this topic.

Professor Call reported briefly on the Committee of Six's meeting with the Consultative Group for Tenure-Track Faculty (Professors Boucher, Jeong, Nelson, and Robinson), which had been held on November 14. The group, which was formed last spring, was created as a representative body for tenure-track faculty and to serve as a conduit for communication with the administration. Professor Call said that he is impressed with the work that the group has been doing, which has been substantial and which seems to be of great benefit to tenure-track faculty and to the college. The other members concurred with Professor Call's view. The group is considering whether to recommend that the consultative group eventually becomes a standing committee of the faculty. The members of the Committee of Six said that the consultative group will continue its meetings with small groups of untenured faculty this fall and early next spring and hopes to provide the Committee of Six with a list of recommendations for discussion with the dean and the president once those meetings are complete. In the meantime, the consultative group urged all colleagues to participate in the upcoming COACHE survey, the results from which will provide a wealth of useful data.

President Martin informed the members about her upcoming meeting with Freeman A. Hrabowski, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), and tour of the campus. (Professor Hrabowski's research and publications focus on science and math education, with special emphasis on minority participation and performance. He chaired the National Academies' committee that produced the 2011 report, *Expanding Underrepresented Minority Participation: America's Science and Technology Talent at the Crossroads*. He also was named by President Obama to chair the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for African Americans.) President Martin said that she is looking forward to discussions about the Meyerhoff Scholars Program, which President Hrabowski co-founded in 1988 with philanthropist Robert Meyerhoff and which is considered a national model. (The program, by its own description, is "open to all high-achieving students committed to pursuing advanced degrees and

research careers in science and engineering, and advancing underrepresented minorities in these fields.”) Most members of the committee were familiar with the program, and the committee expressed enthusiasm for President’s Martin’s visit and for the prospect of inviting President Hrabowski to Amherst, if at all possible. President Martin said that she plans to extend an invitation. She asked the members to share with her, before she leaves for Maryland next week, any questions about the Meyerhoff Scholars Program that they would like her to convey. The committee agreed to do so. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

Amended December 2, 2016

The eleventh meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, November 28, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The members reviewed a draft of an agenda for a possible faculty meeting on December 6 and voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward the agenda to the faculty.

Discussion turned to a revised version of Dean Epstein’s proposal to compensate chairs of academic departments and programs. The dean prefaced her remarks by noting that the proposal remains a high priority for her as a means of recognizing the work of chairing, further engaging and informing chairs, and enhancing communication between the faculty and the administration. Dean Epstein said that she had found the committee’s arguments to be compelling when the proposal had been discussed on October 31. She agrees that the size of a department, in and of itself, does not necessarily correlate to the workload of the chair and recognizes that offering course releases and additional leaves as compensation for chairing could lead to inequities, and could be problematic for other reasons. The current iteration of the proposal calls for a flat rate of compensation for all chairs. The members expressed support for this approach. The dean said that she has struggled with the idea of compensating chairs of science departments, who have great responsibilities that extend into the summer, at the same level as chairs of other departments. One rationale for doing so is that the new position of director of the science center should provide some relief for science chairs. The responsibilities of this position are still under discussion, but it is possible that this new administrator will assist with the supervision of some staff members in science departments. Dean Epstein said that she still has concerns about how best to support the unique responsibilities of chairing the music department.

Continuing the discussion, the dean noted that, under the revised proposal, as was the case in the initial version, the expectation will be that chairs have a three-year term. She agreed that a chair might be appointed for just two years, depending on the departmental leave schedule. Professor Hart asked if a faculty member could opt out of serving as chair. The dean responded that, under the proposal, some faculty might be more interested in serving as chairs than others, or might find doing so more attractive during different stages of their personal and professional lives. It would be up to departments to determine the rotation of chairs, though faculty would not be permitted to have consecutive terms as chairs, the dean noted. Professor Call confirmed that the only additional duties being placed on chairs under the proposal are attendance at regular chairs meetings and an annual report to the dean. Dean Epstein said that these would be the additional responsibilities under the plan. The members made some additional editorial suggestions for the sake of clarity, and the dean agreed to incorporate the changes into the proposal. The dean noted that the compensation program, due to budget ramifications, must be approved by the Board of Trustees. The members asked whether the faculty will have an opportunity to discuss the proposal. It was agreed that the proposal should come before the faculty for discussion, and that the faculty could vote to recommend the plan to the board. In regard to the compensation portion of the proposal, it was

noted that the faculty cannot vote to approve its own benefits. The members discussed whether the language about the responsibilities of department chairs in the *Faculty Handbook* should be revised, if the proposal is adopted. It was agreed that the dean would make revisions to the proposal, and that the committee would discuss the plan and related matters this spring.

The members next reviewed [a letter from Professor Wagaman](#), chair of the College Council, and a proposal from the College Council to revise its charge. The members expressed some reservations about the proposed structure and the proposed mechanism for selecting student members, which relies on appointment by the Association of Amherst Students (AAS), rather than student-wide elections for at least some members. The committee also expressed reservations about the balance of faculty members in relation to the number of student members; under the proposal, there would be six student members (five with vote), three members from the administration (two with vote), and three voting faculty members. The members decided to meet with the College Council this spring to discuss the proposal.

The committee also discussed the College Council's proposal to shift responsibility for reviewing and proposing academic calendars from the College Council to the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP). Professor Van Compernelle expressed the view that the calendar should rest with a committee that has a mission that is better aligned with the academic calendar. He feels that shifting oversight to the CEP makes sense. Other members agreed. Professor Moss expressed concern that the CEP is already overburdened and will play a key role in considering the recommendations of the Curriculum Committee, which will take up a good deal of its time. In addition, the process for considering FTEs has become more complex and time-consuming. New programs aimed at diversifying the faculty also require additional work by the CEP, she added. Other members agreed. The members also agreed that responsibility for reviewing and proposing the academic calendar should not rest with the College Council. A number of options for change were discussed. Responsibility could shift to the CEP, the CEP could create a sub-committee of faculty members of the CEP to work on the calendar, or the Committee of Six could appoint an ad hoc committee to address the calendar, when necessary. It was noted that, when it is time for the faculty to approve a new calendar, the CEP could be asked to consider whether changes are needed to the current calendar. If it is felt that changes are not needed, the faculty could be asked to vote to renew the calendar in its current form. Professor Hart said that he favors having an ad hoc committee comprising all relevant stakeholders, as such a structure would offer additional perspectives. The other members of the committee expressed support for Professor Hart's proposal that the Committee of Six appoint an ad hoc committee of key constituents, among them a representative from the CEP, to consider the academic calendar, as needed. It was noted that the registrar should play a key role in regard to the logistics of the calendar. The dean said that she would discuss this issue with the CEP. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twelfth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, December 5, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The members discussed the appointment of a Memorial Minute Committee for John Pemberton III, Stanley Warfield Crosby Professor of Religion, Emeritus, who died on November 30, 2016. It was noted that a memorial service to celebrate Professor Pemberton’s life will be held on Thursday, December 8, at 3 P.M. at Grace Episcopal Church, followed by a reception at Lewis-Sebring.

Conversation turned to a request from the members of the Consultative Group for Tenure-Track Faculty (Professors Boucher, Jeong, Nelson, and Robinson), with whom the Committee of Six had met on November 14. The dean’s office had contacted the group to collaborate on arranging an open meeting with all tenure-track faculty and the Committee of Six this fall, as per the decision made by last year’s Committee of Six that such a meeting be held each fall and spring. The consultative group had expressed concern that an open meeting this late in the semester might be logistically difficult and suggested postponing the meeting until later in the spring semester. The committee concurred with this suggestion. Dean Epstein then suggested that, in future, the Committee of Six offer the option of meeting with all tenure-track faculty in the fall or spring, deciding on what course to take based on feedback from tenure-track faculty members. The committee agreed to take this approach.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Hart asked if the new member of the Committee of Six who would replace him for the spring semester would receive a course release. The dean said that the new member would not have a course release because he or she would not be participating in tenure deliberations. She noted that the release is granted primarily to give members of the committee additional time to review tenure materials.

Professor Hart next asked President Martin about a Tweet from @Amherst College that had appeared recently. Some Amherst students had interpreted the communication as indicating a lack of support for Hampshire College during a difficult time that had followed its decision not to fly the American flag on its campus. While not recalling the exact wording that had been used in the message, the president said that it is her understanding that the purpose of the communication had been simply to correct the record. The college had been receiving numerous messages from individuals who were under the impression that Amherst College—rather than Hampshire—had decided not to fly the flag, which was not correct. Professor Hart thanked the president for this clarification. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

Committee of Six Minutes of Friday, December 9, 2016
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The thirteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 2:15 P.M. on Friday, December 9, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The members discussed the appointment of a Memorial Minute Committee for John Pemberton III, Stanley Warfield Crosby Professor of Religion, Emeritus, who died on November 30, 2016. Emeritus professors Alan Babb and Jan Dizard and Professors Rowland Abiodun, Robert Doran, Susan Niditch, and David Wills (chair) have agreed to serve. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The fourteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:05 P.M. on Monday, December 12, 2016. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Hansen, Hart, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under “Topics of the Day,” the president discussed with the members initial steps that the college will take to learn more about and respond to reports that have emerged regarding racist, misogynist, and homophobic emails and social-media exchanges among members of the men’s cross-country team. She informed the committee that Amherst has retained John M. Greaney, a former justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court who is currently counsel at the law firm of Bulkley, Richardson, and Gelinas, to conduct an investigation. The findings will guide the college’s decisions about disciplinary process. Don Faulstick, director of athletics, has already been speaking with members of the team, none of whom will be permitted to participate in team activities or competitions of any kind until the fact-finding investigation is completed. President Martin expressed disappointment and sadness over the team’s alleged behavior, which reports from alumni suggest may have extended over several years and perhaps longer. The committee shared the president’s deep concern. President Martin said that holding student-athletes accountable for their behavior is important. She would also like to address broader issues regarding the social fabric of the college by launching a positive process to create dialogue about the kind of community students, faculty, and staff want Amherst to be. Professor Call expressed support for moving forward with this idea, and the other members concurred.

The committee next briefly discussed the apparent decrease in college funding for some off-campus work-study positions. The matter seems quite complex, and the dean agreed to research this issue further.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Sitze asked whether there are plans to expand the summer humanities and social sciences bridge program. The dean responded that an expansion of both the summer humanities and social sciences and the summer science programs is under consideration, but is dependent on budgetary considerations and available resources. Expanding these programs is one of the priorities that she has brought forward. Professor Call asked what form such an expansion would take. The dean said that, if funding permits, it is her hope to double the number of students in each program and to add an economics unit to the summer humanities and social sciences program. The length of the programs would continue to be three weeks. Professor Sitze asked about the schedule for making decisions about the budget. President Martin said that more should be known about the results of the process by the end of January or sometime in February. Professor Hart asked if there has been a cohort of students that has been missed, given the availability of slots in the programs currently. The dean responded that research has revealed that the programs could serve a greater number of incoming students who may have less academic preparation and/or come from less advantaged backgrounds. Professor Call asked if studies have been done to determine the outcomes of participation in the summer science program. The dean said that Jesse Barba, director of the Office of Institutional Research, has collected some data on this question, and that Molly Mead, senior advisor to the dean, has conducted some interviews of past participants in the program. The dean noted that these

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studies reveal that participation in the summer science program has not resulted in participants achieving better grades or majoring in STEM fields in significantly higher numbers than would have been predicted given their backgrounds and preparation. The data show that the program appears to help students acclimate to the college and to make them feel part of the Amherst community, which can contribute to their success. Professor Call, who has taught in the summer science program for the past twenty years, said that his experience with summer science students in recent years leads him to believe that the program is having an impact on academic achievement. He noted that some summer science students are now graduating as math majors, which hasn't been true in the past. He suggested that it would be informative to study the performance of summer science students who have participated in the program over the past six years, rather than over a longer period. (The dean later confirmed that Professor Call was correct; in recent years, more summer science program participants have graduated from the college with a STEM major.)

Continuing the conversation, Professor Hansen expressed the view that, while enhancing feelings of belonging to the community is extremely important, the goal should be that summer bridge programs also have an impact on academic performance. The committee agreed, while noting the limitations of programs that are only three weeks in duration. In regard to summer bridge programs in STEM fields, President Martin said that she has been impressed with the work being done by Michael Summers, Robert E. Meyerhoff Chair for Excellence in Research and Mentoring and Distinguished University Professor at University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), which she had recently visited. The dean has contacted Professor Summers, and it is hoped that he will offer advice. Professor Hansen said that Professor Summers is indeed doing excellent work, while noting that the make-up of the student cohort served by the UMBC program is very different from Amherst's. Structural differences between the two programs might well lead to challenges in translating the UMBC model to Amherst, he said. Professor Moss suggested that the college seek grant funding to expand the summer science program as part of the larger goal of enhancing diversity in STEM fields. The dean noted that the Curriculum Committee expects to explore the idea of offering credit for participation in expanded summer bridge programs. There are many issues to consider surrounding this topic, she commented, but it might make participation in longer programs—for example for six weeks—attractive to students. Professor Hansen said that it is his understanding that Professor Honig, director of the Moss Quantitative Center, as well as other colleagues, are learning more about Carleton's online summer bridge program. Adopting this approach might enable students who cannot come to Amherst's campus during the summer to benefit from additional preparation over the summer.

The members turned to personnel matters, after which they considered nominations for replacements for members of committees who are rotating off at the conclusion of the fall term. The committee agreed that it would be helpful for the dean to seek the advice of the Consultative Group of Untenured Faculty about increasing the role of tenure-track faculty in shared governance through greater participation in the work of faculty committees. The members concluded that, when tenure-track faculty, and tenured faculty for that matter, are invited to serve on committees, it would be helpful for the dean to provide information about the workload, when the committee meets (if there is a standing time), and the functions of the committee. The members agreed that it should also be made clear that declining an invitation to serve on a committee would not have any negative repercussions; tenure-track faculty should not feel compelled to serve, if doing so would be too much of a burden

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and/or would present schedule conflicts. The dean agreed to have her office contact committee chairs to obtain the information described above and to share a summary when inviting faculty to serve on committees.

Conversation turned to how to move forward with the faculty's consideration of the "The Place of Athletics at Amherst College, Revisiting the Diver Report." Professor Van Compernelle noted that several colleagues had asked him to request that there be an opportunity for the faculty to continue the discussion about the report, and athletics more generally, which had begun at the faculty meeting on December 6. Professor Ratner had emailed the committee to request that, rather than having the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA) and/or the Education and Athletics Committee take up this report at length in the absence of additional faculty-wide input, the topic should return to the floor of the faculty as soon as is feasible. He noted that numerous colleagues still had things to say or questions to ask when the committee of the whole ended at the faculty meeting. Professor Ratner also pointed out that other aspects of the report—hours of practice each week and the ubiquity of captains' practices—had not been considered in any depth during the faculty's conversation. In addition, Professor Umphrey had sent [a letter to the dean \(shared with the Committee of Six and appended to these minutes with Professor Umphrey's permission\)](#), in which she discussed several approaches for moving forward with conversation about athletics and related issues.

Professor Call said that he favors continuing to offer opportunities for the faculty to discuss the report and noted that colleagues should be provided with all data that have been requested. He commented that, while there are certainly issues of concern in regard to athletics and more consistent oversight that is needed, it is important to recognize that progress has been made, and that the state of athletics is better today than at the time of the Diver I report. He noted as an example of a missed opportunity for improvement that the proportion of athletes had been allowed to remain the same as the student body grew, resulting in an increase in the number of athletes. Generally, Professor Call noted, Amherst has more student-athletes of color and has strengthened the academic qualifications of its athletes since the time of Diver I. The college is a leader in these regards among its NESCAC (New England Small College Athletics Conference) peers.

President Martin said that she is thinking about Professor Umphrey's suggestion that a group be created to consider a broad set of interconnected issues that center around student experiences, of which athletics is part. The group, in her view, might be composed of faculty members, the dean, herself, and others of counsel and should take an integrated approach to considering the problems at hand, soliciting input from the faculty, students, and staff. She explained that a cluster of problems had been created when Amherst diversified its student body without anticipating and preparing for the consequences of doing so. Issues of race, class, and culture and resulting divides—that have had implications in areas ranging from academics to student life—have emerged and need to be addressed holistically. President Martin said that she and the senior staff have been making substantive efforts to address these matters and pointed to the creation of the new dorms and changes to the room-draw system as an example of a step that has been taken to change the tendency of teams to dominate social life on campus. Efforts to create a greater sense of community within residential halls—mixing class years, creating shared spaces, and trying to prevent athletes from living together in large cohorts—have met with some resistance and unhappiness, particularly among some athletes and their families, but will continue, President Martin said. Continuing with her

Amended December 19, 2016

discussion of steps that are being taken, President Martin noted that faculty are creating more team- and project-based learning opportunities for students. Another initiative—considering ways of creating more shared intellectual experiences—is being undertaken by the Curriculum Committee, which will make recommendations to the faculty and offer arguments for the need for such experiences.

President Martin stressed that it will be important for the community to come together to think about the issues that she had outlined and to develop workable solutions. She noted that the administration is working in good faith and said that she fears that an adversarial approach could slow progress and threaten success. The members agreed that forming and charging a small group of faculty to work with the president and the dean, and to seek input from the community, would be a desirable approach to considering the problems facing the college. The members agreed that, in this context, it would be desirable also to provide the faculty, as a collective, with an opportunity to continue the discussion of athletics at a meeting in February, and for the president to give her perspectives on the set of issues facing the college. The members expressed the view that the faculty would welcome the occasion to learn more from the president about the complexities that she had just summarized. President Martin said that she would welcome the opportunity to continue discussion with the faculty at a faculty meeting in February and afterward. Professor Hansen suggested that it could be desirable to involve members of the Board of Trustees in some of the discussions that are being envisioned—for example, he continued, a statement from the board that the college should now aggressively move forward to increase the diversity of recruited athletes would, in his view, be positively received. Other members expressed the view that it might be preferable not to invite the participation of the board at this stage.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

Committee of Six Minutes of Monday, December 19, 2016
Amended January 11, 2017



AMHERST COLLEGE

Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations

TIMOTHY VAN COMPERNOLLE

Dear Bidy, Catherine, and members of the Committee of Six

Since I am being considered for promotion to full professor, I take the opportunity to write to you in order to contextualize my research, teaching, and service since receiving tenure in 2011.

Research

I began graduate study in Japanese literature with a strong interest in literary style in the Meiji period (1868-1912), the historical moment when classical Japanese was displaced by a literary language that converged with spoken Japanese. Through exposure to literary and cultural theory, I became interested in how this question might be informed by gender. In nineteenth-century Japan, women were figured as the keepers of tradition, while male authors experimented with new forms under the influence of European literature. Women writers did not use the new, more colloquial style until the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century. My understanding was further transformed by my exposure to historicist forms of literary criticism that seek to insert literature, including questions of form and style, into the maelstrom of social change. I came to focus on the figure of Higuchi Ichiyō (1872-1896) as a way to think about how a Meiji woman writer standing at the cusp of the twentieth century could simultaneously occupy the gendered position of antiquarian, writing short stories in classical Japanese and alluding to a plethora of classical texts, yet also be engaged with contemporary social transformations. I ultimately read her fiction as an exploration of the women and men who had been cast aside during modernization, a conclusion that put me rather far, in the end, from my original focus on literary style. Characters who have to navigate a world in which traditional status hierarchies were replaced by social mobility are prominent her fiction. But it was larger than this one writer and the short story form. Extending my research to the modern novel became my second project.

My first book, *The Uses of Memory: The Critique of Modernity in the Fiction of Higuchi Ichiyō* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), had already been published when I arrived in the Valley, so most of my time since coming to Amherst has been spent on this second book, *Struggling Upward: Worldly Success and the Japanese Novel* (Harvard University Asia Center), which appeared in print in January 2016. I had originally conceived the project as chronological, stretching from the 1870s until the 1930s, concluding with a chapter on cinema. The final product was quite different, focusing instead on the late Meiji novel. *Struggling Upward* argues that the modern ideology of social mobility profoundly shaped the modern Japanese novel, and I point to the narrative conceptualization of space as being of the utmost importance. In brief, I show that social mobility was the privileged lens through which Meiji novelists explored the fractured, heterogeneously coded space of a centralizing, industrializing nation-state, as well as notions of national belonging and social hierarchy in the new polity. I used the conclusion of the book to more fully develop my ideas on the way modern literature

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AMHERST COLLEGE

Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations

December 12, 2016

Dear Dean Epstein and Members of the Committee of Six,

We write as full professors of the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations unequivocally recommending Professor Tim Van Compernelle for promotion to full professor. Rather than repeating Professor Van Compernelle's own discussion of his work in the letter that he has submitted to the Committee of Six, we decided instead to comment briefly upon the importance of his recent scholarship and to reaffirm his extraordinary teaching and service to the department and the college.

Since being awarded tenure in 2011, Van Compernelle has published an important second book, *Struggling Upward: Worldly Success and the Japanese Novel* (Harvard University Asia Center 2016), two articles and has participated actively in professional conferences. He has submitted an additional article for publication, and has begun work on a new book project, provisionally entitled *Celluloid Metaphors: Japanese Literature in the Age of Cinema*. This book clearly draws from Van Compernelle's interest in cinema, which he has explored through his active participation in the Department of Film and Media Studies as well.

Van Compernelle's second book investigates *risshin shusse* (upward social mobility) in the modern Japanese novel. He frames his arguments in the context of the globally circulating discourse, about social mobility and worldly success that accompanied industrialization and sociopolitical changes such as urbanization, new forms of social mobility, and the emergence and solidification of the nation state that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The subject of the book is the intersection of this new discourse with the form of the novel itself. He asks: How is the narrative form of the novel participatory in discussions of social mobility – not only in reflecting them, but in promoting them? How did concepts of social mobility shape modern Japanese fiction? What were its implications for specific literary forms? In *Struggling Upward*, Van Compernelle argues that *risshin shusse* is one of the most powerful ideologies of modernity. It regulates individuals' place in society, shifts the definitions of social inclusion and mobility, and reorient the form and place of the nation state in the reader's imagination. These novels are not only about ambition and worldly success, but are deeply imbued with new discourses of individualism. The modern novel developed in this historical context, in symbiotic relationship, serving not only as venue to explore these new ideas and their impact on individuals and society alike, but also as a vehicle for articulating new possibilities of individual self-fashioning, and of the renegotiation of social boundaries that necessarily result. As Van Compernelle notes in his introduction, "*Struggling Upward* places the discourse on worldly success at the center of the study of the novel's emergence and maturation in Japan."

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Timothy J. Van Compernelle
Associate Professor of Japanese
Department of Asian Languages & Civilizations
Amherst College

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EDUCATION

a) Degrees

- Ph.D. (Japanese literature), University of Michigan, December 2001.
Diss.: "A Dialogue between Past and Present: The Fiction of Higuchi Ichiyō"
- M.A. (Japanese literature), University of Michigan, fall 1997.
Thesis: "Landscape and Poetic Place Names in the *Sarashina Diary*"
- M.A. (Japanese language and culture), University of Kansas, May 1995.
Thesis: "The Perfect Tense Usage of the Conditionals in Japanese"
- B.A. (East Asian Cultures), University of Kansas, May 1992.

b) Additional Education in Japan as Graduate Student

- Graduate Research Fellow, University of Tokyo, Sep. '98-Dec. '99.
- Ōbin University in Tokyo, Japan, Sept. '93-Aug. '94.

c) Languages

Fluent in modern Japanese; excellent reading ability in classical Japanese;
proficiency in modern Chinese (Mandarin); reading ability in French.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- Associate Professor of Japanese (with tenure), Amherst College, July 2011~
- Assistant Professor of Japanese, Amherst College, July 2007~July 2011
- Assistant Professor of Japanese, College of William and Mary, July 2003 to July 2007
- Visiting Assistant Professor of Japanese and Oberlin-Michigan Partnership Postdoctoral Fellow, Oberlin College, July 2001 to July 2003. This was a program to introduce new Ph.D.s from RI institutions to the liberal arts college environment.

VISITING POSITIONS IN JAPAN

- Visiting scholar at Dōshisha University, Kyoto, Japan, fall 2009
- Visiting scholar at Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan, 2006-07 academic year
- Visiting scholar at Keiō University, Tokyo, Japan, 2006-07 academic year

The sixteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, January 23, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with the president, the dean, and the committee welcoming Professor Frank to the Committee of Six. She will serve for the spring 2017 semester. (A special election was held in the fall of 2016 to replace Professor Hart, who was required to leave the committee at the end of the fall term when he assumed the administrative position of faculty diversity and inclusion officer.) The members then agreed that the following dates should be held for possible faculty meetings during the spring 2017 semester: February 7, March 7, March 21, April 4, April 18, May 2, and Thursday, May 18, 2017 (at 9:00 A.M.).

Dean Epstein informed the members that, in response to questions posed by the committee last semester, Ms. Kilventon, the registrar, provided additional information about the history of the college’s policy regarding withdrawal from courses. The dean said that she shared the registrar’s information with Professor Hart, who had initiated a Committee of Six discussion about this topic, and that his questions have been resolved. Ms. Kilventon informed the dean that the dean of students and class deans have always had the authority to grant withdrawals based on the criteria provided below. The language pertaining to instructors and advisors has always addressed consultation and not approval, the registrar said. If there are questions about how the class deans apply these policies, the deans should be consulted directly, Ms. Kilventon noted. In her experience, the class deans do consult with instructors when the situation concerns academic difficulty. Withdrawals for medical or grave personal reasons may be handled slightly differently, depending on the circumstances, privacy issues, and the urgency of a situation, Ms. Kilventon explained. In regard to Professor Hart’s specific question about his advisee, the registrar said that, without knowing the student’s name, it would be difficult to understand the circumstances that had led to the process that had been followed. She said that she believes that there has not been a change to policy or a disregard of a policy in any systemic way. The registrar noted that the policies below show that there have been votes to change the end of add/drop from fourteen days, to ten days, to eight days, and that titles of the deans have been altered slightly over the years, but that the language has remained fairly consistent since 1989 (it dates back to 1968). Ms. Kilventon said that she hopes that the committee finds the information below to be helpful in clarifying the history of the policy. The first mention of a student allowed to graduate with thirty-one courses, rather than thirty-two, appears in 1968-1969 catalog, she noted.

Amherst College Catalog 1968-1969, page 51

A member of the Class of 1969 will be eligible for graduation upon the completion of the equivalent of 31 full courses, rather than 32 courses now stipulated, assuming that he has remained a student in full standing for 8 semesters. One course failure or one course dropped with a failing grade will be permitted without makeup.

No student will be eligible for graduation with honors without fulfilling the standing requirement of passing the equivalent of 32 courses unless he qualified for special exemption under the present provisions for exemption.

Beginning with the Class of 1970 the full implications of the present definition of graduation will apply.

No student may drop a course from his program after the 10th day of the semester without incurring a failure. Exceptions to this rule shall be made only for grave medical reasons, or reasons of grave personal emergency and shall be made only to the Dean of Students.

A student who has not passed four full courses in any given semester must clarify his standing with the Dean of Students within seven days of his being notified of his deficiency. A student whose deficiency is attributed to a medical or other grave personal emergency may appeal to the Committee of Six, by application to its Secretary, for an abatement of the required number of thirty two full courses for graduation.

In 1989 the language changes again and reads as follows:

Amherst College Catalog 1989-1990 page 61

A freshman who experiences severe academic difficulty may petition the Dean of Freshmen for permission to drop one course without penalty during the first year. The Dean of Freshmen, in consultation with the instructor and advisor will decide on the basis of the student's education needs whether or not to grant the petition. Petitions to withdraw will normally only be accepted during the sixth, seventh and eighth weeks of either the first or second semester. Exceptions to this rule shall be made only for disabling, medical reasons or reasons of grave personal emergency, and shall be made by the Dean of Freshmen.

Transfer students may petition their Class Dean to drop one course without penalty during the sixth, seventh or eighth weeks of their first semester at Amherst. They must follow the petition procedures described above. The Class Dean, in consultation with the Instructor and advisor will decide on the basis of the student's education needs whether or not to grant the petition.

For sophomores, juniors and seniors exceptions to the rule prohibiting the dropping of a course after the fourteenth calendar day of the semester shall be made only for disabling medical reasons or reasons of grave personal emergency, and shall be made only by the Dean of Students in consultation with the student's class dean.

Conversation returned briefly to the committee's questions about off-campus positions supported by Federal Work-Study and the college's approach to providing the matching funds to some organizations that serve as work sites. (As was noted in the committee's discussion last semester, Federal Work-Study funding does not cover certain expenses; agencies typically pay a 10 percent match toward wages and 9.65 percent in taxes—Federal Insurance Contributions Act and workman's compensation—for a total of 19.65 percent.) In response to the college's decision to discontinue the use of its funding to cover the match for off-campus sites for Federal Work Study positions, Professor Hart had expressed the view that the A Better Chance (ABC) program should continue to receive these funds because of ABC's long-standing relationship with the college. (A decision had been made that funding would no longer be provided to the ABC after this academic year.) Dean Epstein said that she had shared the committee's questions and Professor Hart's concerns with Sarah

Barr, director of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE); Emily Griffen, director of the Loeb Center for Career Exploration and Planning; and Gail Holt, dean of Financial Aid. They had informed her that the CCE, Loeb Center, and Office of Financial Aid are unable to continue the practice of using college funding to cover the match for off-campus sites for the following reasons, which they described in writing as follows:

1. Programmatic Changes

When the Careers in Education Professions Program was created in 2013, the supervision of the ABC and Vela tutoring programs moved from the CCE to the Loeb Center, but programming costs were subsidized by the CCE through the end of the 2015–2016 academic year. Moving forward, staff members in the Loeb Center will continue to work closely with ABC, but the department will not support or subsidize individual organizational partners through its Careers in Education Professions Program. Taking on responsibility for the Federal Work Study match for year-round student employees for any organization is not a programmatic plank for the Loeb Center, nor is it supported by any appropriate funding source.

2. Funding

Under the original CCE grant, foundation funding was used to support several student workers, supplies, transportation, training for tutors, and professional staff to oversee the volunteer program. The ABC tutors were part of a broader, well-resourced initiative that supported volunteers at several afterschool tutoring programs. The current grants that support the Careers in Education Professions Program and the CCE do not include funding for Federal Work Study positions.

3. Sites

The college maintains more than 150 contracts off-campus for work-study positions at seven local sites. All local sites, except ABC, are billed monthly for 19.65 percent of the student's wages. The decision to end this practice puts ABC in alignment with other local organizations that have not been the beneficiary of this resource.

4. Equity

Federal Work Study positions off campus can be an incredible opportunity for students looking to build skills, explore academic interests, and prepare for a range of careers. The college's practice of providing matching support based on a historical relationship and grant funding is not sustainable or transparent.

The dean said that Ms. Barr, Ms. Griffen, and Dean Holt conveyed that they “recognize the long-standing relationship between the college and ABC and that Amherst students have found their work with the ABC scholars to be meaningful and important.” They noted that Amherst will continue to maintain strong ties with ABC, but not in the form of financial support for tutors. “If the college is interested in providing a funding source to subsidize the full off-campus match for work-study eligible student employees, the three administrators wrote that they would “explore ways to distribute the funding so that it aligns with the mission of the college and meets the needs of students.”

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Hansen asked the president about the level of visibility of the college’s communications about the outcomes of Amherst’s investigation into reports of inappropriate online exchanges among members of the men’s cross-country team. President Martin responded that a statement about the actions that the college is taking can be found on the athletics website. She responded that, since the college learned in December about the behavior of the team, information has been shared widely, and emphasis has been placed on transparency. Professor Hansen suggested that, as much as possible, information about this matter should be readily available, so that prospective students, in particular those who might wish to become members of Amherst’s cross-country team, can be fully informed. Professor Hansen asked if any students who were accepted under the college’s early decision program and who likely would be on the cross-country team have expressed concern about the team. President Martin said that students who were accepted via early decision have been offered the opportunity to withdraw from the agreement that would bind them to come to the college, without penalty. She responded that she has addressed the concerns of a small number of parents of accepted students when they have contacted her. No recently accepted students have withdrawn from the college to her knowledge.

Continuing with questions, Professor Frank suggested that the committee address the topic of ways to bolster Amherst’s preparedness for concerted attacks by “alt-right” forces, offering incidents at Hampshire College and Drexel University as examples of such attacks. She noted that Amherst has already been more mildly targeted in the press (noting the *New York Times* specifically), and expressed the view that higher education is in the crosshairs of frightening and organized racist forces. Professor Frank said that she would like to begin a conversation this spring about the importance of adopting a proactive approach both to protecting the community and standing up for the college’s principles. President Martin agreed that the college has, should, and would take a principled approach in its responses. Professor Frank expressed the view that there may be effective strategies, even under challenging circumstances. She asked about Amherst’s process for responding to attacks—via Twitter, for example—and about the individuals or offices at the college responsible for developing the content of responses. President Martin said that she and the dean decide about the position that the college will take and the response to a given situation, in consultation with the Committee of Six (if time permits) and the senior staff, depending on the events that have taken place and the level of communication that is needed.

Professor Frank suggested that it would be desirable to involve the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, as well, as responses are developed. President Martin noted that the chief diversity and inclusion officer is part of the senior staff. In addition, Professor Frank continued, it would be helpful, in advance of needing to respond to a particular situation in “real time,” to draft arguments that refute the idea that higher education merely represents political correctness run amok. A statement could be prepared on the ways in which higher education functions as a laboratory for the exchange of ideas within inclusive communities, for example. Continuing the conversation, Professor Sitze noted that some attacks begin with calculated outrages designed to “provoke the censor.” These attacks then adduce critical responses to those outrages as evidence that higher education is sanctimonious, repressive, and undemocratic. Instead of taking the bait, he commented, effective responses to this sort of provocation might reclaim satire and parody as intellectual resources. He also observed that there is a difference between real intellectual debate and the kind of scandal-driven controversy that saturates the internet and cable news. Because the former is scarce and the latter is ubiquitous, because the former aspires to educate and the latter is mere

entertainment, he feels that the college should encourage students to use limited college resources only for outside speakers who engage in the former. He and Professor Hansen expressed support for Professor Frank's idea of preparing responses that articulate the college's principles, and doing so before attacks happen, rather than in "real time." President Martin said that it would be helpful to discuss strategies with the Committee of Six. She suggested that faculty consider publishing in the public domain—op-eds, for example—which she sees as an opportunity to make the case for the role and value of higher education. The members then turned to personnel matters.

Conversation turned to a report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Faculty Meeting Hours. It was noted that a [proposal](#) that last year's Committee of Six had received last spring had prompted that body to charge the ad hoc committee with exploring the feasibility of creating a weekly two-hour block during the day that could be set aside for faculty meetings and community scheduling. It had been agreed that, in general, to reduce class bunching, making fuller use of the timeslots that are available for classes would be helpful. When it met with the ad hoc committee in the fall of 2016, the Committee of Six had recommended that the ad hoc committee make a proposal for a single two-hour block during the day, other than on Friday afternoon, that could be reserved for faculty meetings, a community hour, and departmental matters—rather than presenting a series of options. It had been agreed that the proposal should describe changes that would be necessary in the teaching schedule to reserve the slot. The Committee of Six had also asked the ad hoc committee to offer substantive arguments for creating a community hour as part of the proposal. It was noted that one of the recommendations of the strategic plan was that the college "introduce a time in each week free of classes, practices, and meetings when we can plan on gathering as a community or enjoying various forms of camaraderie."

The members discussed the ad hoc committee's proposal that faculty meetings and community hours be held on Thursdays from 1:00 to 2:50 P.M., and the process by which the faculty should consider the ad hoc committee's ideas. The dean commented that it is her understanding that the ad hoc committee would recommend undertaking the proposed changes on a trial basis for three years. To create the new meeting time, according to the ad hoc committee, it will be necessary to create a new block of course times on Friday afternoon, a time that is currently underutilized. There would be other significant ramifications for the teaching schedule. Professor Moss asked if any mechanism would be necessary to compel faculty to teach on Friday afternoons. She said that it seems unlikely that many faculty will want to make this shift voluntarily. Some members noted that the proposal relies on good will in regard to increasing the number of courses that are taught on Friday, since there is currently no requirement that departments make use of all available time slots. The ad hoc committee did not propose such a requirement. Professor Call commented that departments could certainly be encouraged to make use of all slots. It was noted that, in its proposal, the ad hoc committee had commented that, "[Departments] should strive to use the possible course times as fully as possible. In general, they should avoid reusing slots until they have used all the available slots for classes of that particular length." Professor Sitze said that he would be in favor of the faculty voting to mandate that departments use all available slots. At the moment, Amherst does not truly mount an open curriculum, in his view, since class bunching occurs to such an extent that it effectively limits students' access to the curriculum. Professor Moss expressed concern that untenured and contingent faculty could end up teaching in less preferable slots, without their consent, if such a mandate were to be adopted and scheduling became a departmental matter. Professor Sitze agreed that abuses would be possible, and that structures would have to be put in place in order to protect vulnerable faculty under such a system. For many years, Professor Hansen

noted, some science departments have coordinated the times in which their course offerings are scheduled, with biology, chemistry, and physics each using a separate time slot for all of their respective introductory courses; this system minimizes scheduling conflicts for students but requires that each of the three departments teaches a number of its courses at the same time (courses in which students cannot register simultaneously, such as introductory chemistry and organic chemistry).

Continuing with the discussion about the possible effects of shifting more courses to Friday, the dean commented that the ad hoc committee had addressed two other potential concerns. The ad hoc committee had discussed the idea that faculty may find it difficult to teach courses that meet Friday afternoons because of occasional weekend conferences that require Friday travel, and that the proposal might affect some athletes' participation in some courses, since certain teams have weekend tournaments that might require Friday travel. Based on the ad hoc committee's review of recent athletic travel schedules for Fridays, the impact of this proposal on an athlete's ability to take Friday courses would be minimal, Dean Epstein noted. She commented that, while faculty members may sometimes travel to conferences on Fridays, she suspects that few likely do so often enough to interfere with teaching on Friday.

Professor Moss expressed concern that the proposal eliminates a prime time for teaching seminars on Thursday afternoons and would push the teaching of seminars to later in the day, which could pose challenges for faculty with young children. She said that, while she finds evening faculty meetings problematic, she would choose the current system over the proposed one. The dean pointed out that the proposal allows for teaching seminars in early-morning slots and in the afternoon on other days of the week. It was noted that, under the proposal, labs would have to start at 3:00 on Thursday. Professor Hansen said that he does not feel that doing so on Thursdays would present a problem, and he noted that there are labs that begin at this time now. Professor Sitze commented that the option of teaching a course on Tuesday and Friday had a strong curricular rationale, because it would allow students to have more time for reading between class meetings. He also noted that, if faculty meetings are held in a 1:00 to 2:50 time slot, faculty who have 3:00 labs will have a "hard stop." Having to leave promptly for labs could constrain the faculty's ability to extend meetings and thus constrain debate, he noted. The dean said that having meetings more regularly—perhaps once a month—would mean that a discussion/business that starts at one meeting could continue at the next, without as much of a gap in time as is true now. Professor Van Compernelle said that his experiences at other institutions have taught him that faculty meetings that are held during the day are sparsely attended. The time that is being proposed for faculty meetings and the community hour is one of the most heavily used for classes, he noted. He suspects that, without a mechanism to ensure that some courses move to Friday, particularly in the first year, there could be serious problems. He is, however, in favor of bringing the proposal to the faculty. Dean Epstein suggested that faculty could be asked to submit to the registrar the times that they wish to schedule their courses at an earlier point than they do now. If it appears that there would be significant scheduling issues, departments and/or individual faculty could be asked to shift to other timeslots. Professor Hansen, stressing the importance of ensuring that everyone understands the implications of approving the proposal, argued that it should be made clear to the faculty that colleagues should not vote "yes" on the proposal if they are unwilling to move any of their classes to Friday.

Professor Frank expressed some concern that there are so many moving parts in regard to the class schedule that it is challenging to unpack what the proposed changes would mean. For this reason, it is difficult for her to form a judgment about the proposal. She suggested that the ad hoc

committee be asked to present its information in a format that offers greater clarity about the available options. It was agreed that the dean should ask Jesse Barba, director of institutional research, and Ms. Kilventon, in collaboration with the rest of the ad hoc committee, to create a presentation that would lay out the options for scheduling particular kinds of courses. One suggestion was to make a chart of the current usage of various meeting times and associated classrooms to showcase the status quo. Professor Frank suggested that adding an evening time slot, even once a week, would be desirable and could reduce bunching during the day. It was noted that there has long been an argument against this approach because of conflicts that would occur for students involved in the performing arts and athletics, though there are sometimes sections of courses that are held in the evening (but only when the course has multiple sections). Professor Van Compernelle commented that it seems that Amherst has boxed itself into a compressed teaching schedule in order to minimize conflicts for students. Professors Call and Van Compernelle suggested that, rather than letting potential conflicts dictate the scheduling options, students could be encouraged to make choices about what they want to do. Learning how to make choices is a valuable “life skill,” they agreed.

Turning to the topic of the creation of a community hour—one of the primary reasons behind the proposal—some members were skeptical about the level of interest in this idea among members of the Amherst community. Although she supports the idea, Professor Frank noted that, in her strategic planning group’s conversations about this with students, many students said that they are not interested in having a community hour and would simply do their work during that time, if a community hour were to be created. Some members of the faculty have also expressed this view. There is some indication that students would like the opportunity for the community to come together. Amherst Uprising is an example of when such a gathering occurred organically. Professors Frank and Call said that having a time when members of the community disconnect from technology to engage with one another would be highly desirable. The dean commented that having programming such as lectures, workshops, and other campus-wide events during the day, as would happen during a community hour, would make it more likely that staff would participate. Professor Sitze raised some concern that having speakers during the day might make it challenging for members of the local community to attend lectures.

The Committee of Six, thanking the ad hoc committee for all of its hard work, agreed that the proposal should be brought to the faculty. It would be best to have a committee-of-the-whole conversation as a first step, during which views could be aired and questions asked, the members concurred. If there is sufficient interest, a formal motion for revising the teaching schedule, as proposed for the stated purposes, could be brought to the faculty.

Prompted by some concerns raised by Professor Hansen, the committee briefly discussed whether the members should consider issues surrounding equity in the faculty’s teaching loads. It was agreed that this is an important issue, and the members decided to proceed with this discussion later in the term, after departmental data about contact hours and other pertinent issues, such as staffing, are gathered. The dean said that she would ask Mr. Barba to take on this project. The issue to be explored is not the quality of teaching, the members agreed, but equity. Another topic of interest is student access to service on committees—i.e., the process for selecting student-members of faculty and college committees.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The seventeenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, January 30, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Dean Epstein informed the committee that the Faculty Lecture Committee has selected Chris Grobe, assistant professor of English, as the 2016–2017 Lazerowitz Lecturer. He will give his lecture sometime this spring, she noted. A member of the Amherst faculty below the rank of full professor is selected annually for this appointment, the dean noted. The members turned to a personnel matter.

The committee next reviewed a draft of a faculty meeting agenda for a possible meeting on February 7. The members voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward the agenda to the faculty. The committee discussed briefly the members’ two upcoming meetings with tenure-track faculty. The purpose of the meetings, as outlined by a previous Committee of Six that suggested that such meetings take place annually, is to provide a forum for tenure-track faculty to express their views and ask questions.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Van Compernelle expressed appreciation for [President Martin’s January 29 email to the community](#), which followed President Trump’s executive order suspending entry into the United States for refugees for 120 days; nationals from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen for 90 days; and Syrian refugees indefinitely. In her note, President Martin said that Amherst students, faculty, and staff from the affected countries, including those who are dual citizens or have green cards, are being advised not to travel outside of the U.S. Professor Van Compernelle asked how many members of the Amherst community are being directly affected by the executive order. The president said that she is aware of four students, one staff member, and one faculty member. There may be others about whom the college has not been informed. Professor Van Compernelle also thanked the president for updating the community via the [webpage](#) that was created last semester in support of Amherst’s undocumented students and students with DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) status. Professor Sitze asked what the plans are for members of the community who may not be able to return to their countries. President Martin said that the college will offer the advice of immigration attorneys.

The members next reviewed drafts of the dean’s letters to department chairs and candidates concerning tenure that are sent to chairs and candidates each spring. Several members proposed modest revisions to the letter, and the committee agreed that these changes should be incorporated. The dean shared with the committee language that Smith College developed about new modes of scholarly production to include in its letters of solicitation to potential external reviewers for tenure cases. The members reviewed that information and decided to add some of the language to the letters that the dean sends to tenure candidates and chairs. The language reads as follows: “If the candidate’s scholarship includes work produced through and/or published in emerging media, or exploring new scholarly methodologies in the field, the college invites external evaluators to consult any guidelines for evaluating such scholarship that may have been developed by the discipline’s scholarly association or learned society.”

Conversation turned to a proposal, forwarded by the advancement office, to raise funds to support a program that would bring a small number of scholar-teachers to Amherst as visiting faculty, with the goal of contributing to the diversity of ideas, approaches, and perspectives on campus. The dean explained that the idea would be for the Amherst faculty to nominate scholars for these positions. The Committee of Six would review CVs and make recommendations to the dean

about all candidates. Continuing, Dean Epstein noted that funds raised would enable the college to host scholars who hold views that are underrepresented or even unpopular on campus, with the purpose of creating further opportunities for the rigorous exchange of ideas within the college community. In her view, among the most compelling arguments for having scholars on campus who hold views that are at odds with those of much of the community is that these visitors can encourage those who have commonly held views to strengthen their arguments. While the balance of points of view within the faculty may fluctuate over time, funding would give the dean of the faculty the resources and flexibility needed to help ensure that a breadth of perspectives inform teaching, learning, scholarship, and community.

Professor Call asked whether there would be a requirement that visitors be hosted by departments. Dean Epstein agreed that there should be such a requirement, while noting that a visitor's courses could be taught as colloquia, if preferred. Professor Moss asked how the views that would be defined as "underrepresented" would be determined. How might, she asked, the administration determine the individual political views of current faculty. She also expressed discomfort with the idea that candidates for the proposed appointments might be selected based on their own personal political views, rather than solely on the merits of their research and teaching, as is customary hiring practice. Professor Moss felt that the proposal might also misconstrue what Amherst faculty do; colleagues are dedicated to teaching students about a range of ideas, irrespective of their own personal political inclinations, she noted. Professor Hansen said that he shares Professor Moss's concerns and commented that the proposal's stated emphasis on "intellectual diversity" appears to him to be a smokescreen for an effort to promote a conservative agenda. Amherst already has tremendous intellectual diversity, he noted. Professor Van Compernelle agreed. He commented that, in referencing "unpopular ideas," the proposal suggested an emphasis that was purely national in nature—for example conservatives versus liberals in the United States, rather than a diversity of cultural and intellectual ideas.

The committee agreed that there are other ways to embed into the formal curriculum additional courses that contribute to the diversity of ideas on campus, including courses that focus on conservative thought. President Martin agreed and said that she believes that bringing scholars to campus who focus their scholarship and teaching on the history, tenets, and development of various strands of conservative thought would have educational benefits for all students. In addition, she commented, this effort could help to address the needs of some students with conservative views, who have expressed a desire to take courses from faculty who treat conservative ideas favorably. Professor Moss argued that constructing a curriculum based on the personal political beliefs of individual faculty represents a departure from the liberal arts. Professor Frank commented that the college has institutional values—for example, anti-feminist, homophobic, racist, and anti-multicultural views are not condoned—and she wondered what message we would be sending to our students if we brought scholars to campus who oppose the very values that made their presence and voices possible. Professor Sitze asked what problem the proposal might be trying to solve. He posed the following questions: is the problem that students do not know how to debate those who have points of view that differ from their own? Is the problem that students are not exposed sufficiently to the history and theory of conservatism? Is there an alumni problem? Is there a recruitment problem in regard to students who hold conservative views? Is there a perception problem, with the idea being that, because Amherst appears left-leaning, it is losing what Alexander Meiklejohn once called "public confidence"? (Professor Sitze asked that [relevant excerpts from President Meiklejohn's *The Liberal College*](#) be provided in these minutes.) Professor Sitze also

suggested that the members read a 2007 American Association of University Professors (AAUP) report titled [“Freedom in the Classroom.”](#) He noted that the report sets forth a number of principles that would be helpful as institutions of higher learning (including Amherst) think about how to respond to critics who say that the education they provide lacks balance and diversity, that students are being indoctrinated, and so on.

Continuing with conversation, Professor Sitze proposed that, rather than appointing visitors, consideration should be given to bringing a tenure-line scholar-teacher to the college whose area of research is the history of conservatism and/or the history of conservative thought. The rationale for this position, he suggested, would not be to respond to criticisms about balance or diversity, which, following AAUP guidance, he regards as ill-conceived. It would be that for many years now conservatism has been in crisis, and that today that crisis is affecting everyone. Such scholars could be situated in a number of disciplines, he argued, and could have a significant impact on intellectual life at Amherst. The committee discussed whether the structure of a “floating FTE,” along the lines of the five new FTEs that were allocated for diversifying the faculty, might be a useful approach for making such an appointment. The committee agreed that an individual’s political views should not be a metric in the selection process. The president and dean concurred. President Martin and Dean Epstein thanked the members for sharing their views, agreed that the proposal forwarded by the advancement office should not come to fruition, and said that they are intrigued by the suggestion that there be a tenure-line hire with a specialty in conservative thought and/or history. Professor Hansen said that creating a mechanism for an FTE request to emerge through a process that is not departmentally based would represent a departure from procedures and, in his view, would present governance challenges. Donors should not be determining the areas in which FTEs are allocated, he commented. Other members noted that departments could be asked to submit proposals for an available FTE. Professor Moss expressed support for this approach and said that she could imagine departments thinking creatively in developing such proposals. President Martin and Dean Epstein said that they would think further about the proposed position.

In the time remaining, conversation turned briefly to the proposal from the College Council to revise its charge. The members once again expressed reservations about the proposed structure of the council and the proposed mechanism for selecting student-members, which relies on appointment by the Association of Amherst Students (AAS), rather than student-wide elections. With the goal of discussing ways to expand access for students to participate in the governance of the college, Professor Moss suggested that the committee address the topic of the selection process for student-members of faculty and college committees—in particular the role of the AAS—as a general matter. Professor Call noted that the question of to what extent the faculty can or should determine how students select their representatives is complex. Dean Epstein suggested that the committee focus on the process for selecting student-members of the College Council, as she believes that the process that is currently being used is not consistent with the charge. Professor Sitze noted that an [AAUP 1966 document titled “Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities”](#) contains a paragraph that provides guidance about the place of students in the governance of colleges and universities. He suggested that the members read this document, as doing so could be useful, as the committee discusses the proposed revision to the honor code and the proposed revision to the charge of the College Council.

With the hour growing late, the members agreed to continue their discussion of the proposal to revise the charge of the College Council at the committee’s next meeting. The dean said that it is her understanding that the College Council is still revising its honor code proposal, after receiving

feedback at open meetings with faculty, students, and staff. The members decided that they would meet with the College Council to discuss the honor code and charge proposals, but would wait to do so until the College Council brings forward a final proposal for revising the honor code.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The eighteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, February 6, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The members first discussed how to structure the conversation that would take place the next evening at the faculty meeting about the report of the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst. It was agreed that the best approach would be to use the format of the committee of the whole to learn more about questions that faculty may have and/or issues that they feel should be pursued. The committee asked the dean to mention that the Ad Hoc Faculty Committee on Athletics, which has already begun meeting, would be pleased to receive the faculty’s suggestions and questions regarding the report. At the committee’s request, the dean agreed to do so and to invite the faculty to contact Professors Ringer, Schulkind, and Wagaman for this purpose. They chair the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA), the Committee on Education and Athletics, and the College Council, respectively. The faculty members of these three committees (Professors Bashford, Burkett, A. Dole, Folsom, Hasan, Poe, and van den Berg, in addition to the chairs), along with Professor Sitze, as the representative from the Committee of Six, comprise the ad hoc committee.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” the members expressed appreciation for the [president’s recent letter to secretary of homeland security](#), in which she shared her concern about President Trump’s executive order barring entry to the United States for refugees and citizens from seven predominantly Muslim countries. On behalf of a colleague, Professor Moss asked if the president believes that it is appropriate for the college to set up phone banks for students to call government representatives and whether doing so might threaten Amherst’s tax-exempt status. President Martin, who expressed the view that it is consistent with the college’s mission to support students’ engagement in the democratic process, noted that the phone bank does not pose a legal threat. The members then spoke briefly about the format of their upcoming meetings with tenure-track faculty members and turned to a personnel matter.

The committee next discussed issues relating to last week’s student protests over President Trump’s executive order, and the ways in which the college is supporting those on campus who are most directly affected by the order. Anticipating the possibility of additional student protests during this uncertain political climate, the committee discussed the role of the faculty and approaches that might be considered to communicate academic expectations when protests are taking place, and to ensure that students understand that the choices that they make in regard to participation may have an impact on their educational experience. Professor Van Compernelle suggested that faculty have three options when they learn of a student protest—holding class, starting class late, or cancelling class, depending on the circumstances and the faculty members’ preferences. The committee emphasized, as the dean did in her note to faculty and staff prior to the protest, that faculty members, as always, should use their discretion when deciding whether to delay or cancel class and/or excuse students. Professor Frank said that it is important for the committee to state that tenure-track faculty should make that call without feeling pressure to adopt a particular approach.

Continuing the discussion, Professor Frank expressed her view of the dilemma students and faculty face: participating in protests is a healthy part of students’ educational experience, and so is learning to make judgments about how to prioritize academic work and the desire to protest, weighing possible repercussions. Professor Van Compernelle agreed. Professor Hansen commented that his experience during Amherst Uprising made it clear to him that students appreciate having

faculty acknowledge—regardless of whether they cancel class or not—that they recognize that periods of protest and unrest can have a large impact upon students’ emotional well-being. The committee stressed that there is a heightened need to care for one another during times when members of the community are experiencing deep upset over particular circumstances, and/or supporting friends who are being affected most directly by events. To strengthen ties within the community, Professor Hansen suggested that it would be helpful if there are more opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to spend time together in informal settings. He praised college efforts such as “Everybody Has a Story” week, a program that has as its goal encouraging groups made up of one faculty member, one staff member, and one student to share a meal together. Professor Hansen noted that it appears that many more students and staff participate in this program than faculty. Professor Call commented that, with the staff transitions that have taken place in Student Affairs, he, and many faculty colleagues, don’t have as many personal connections in the office as they may have had in the past. He expressed the view that it would be beneficial to find ways for faculty and staff who work together on crucial issues relating to students to get to know each other better. The other members agreed. Professor Moss commented that she has gotten to know some staff members quite well through co-teaching and serving on committees with them. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The nineteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, February 20, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with President Martin sharing a brief report of the winter meetings of the Board of Trustees, which were held in Washington, D.C., February 9 through February 11. The president noted that a joint meeting of the Amherst College Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors of the Folger Shakespeare Library occurs every two or three years in Washington. She informed the members that Michael Witmore, director of the Folger, presented a proposal for a multi-phase library building expansion, renovation, and maintenance project, which would also include landscape renewal on the site. A comprehensive campaign and other sources of funding would be required to realize the project, which would allow the Folger to share more of its collections and to reach a wider audience—through new and renovated spaces and enhanced programming, as well as expanded digital resources. A decision to move forward with these plans would require the approval of both boards, the president said. Topics discussed by the Amherst board included the college’s comprehensive campaign, recent events on campus, and the college budget. The committee then turned to personnel matters. The members turned briefly to a committee nomination.

“Under Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Hansen noted that he had attended a recent “On Amherst’s Plate” lunch, during which some faculty members had raised the issue of the increasing number of students at the college who are entitled to academic accommodations, for example extended time on tests, and the increasing difficulties in properly meeting the students’ needs. Professor Hansen commented that he has experienced challenges on this front, and that he senses that the problem is acute for faculty in STEM fields and economics, in particular. He and other faculty members had suggested that more institutional resources be devoted to creating “distraction-free” spaces and testing facilities and ensuring that there are staff in place to help coordinate the logistics surrounding student accommodations. Professor Moss raised a related issue, describing her dissatisfaction when using ACData to understand her students’ specific disability accommodations. She found that the system lacks explanatory information and requires multiple steps to understand students’ accommodations, as the system is opaque and requires multiple steps using several web tools. She also noted that students should not be responsible for explaining the specific accommodations to which they are entitled. Rather, it is the responsibility of the college to convey that information in a clear manner to the faculty. The dean responded that the Presidential Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion has been considering these issues. She said that she will talk with Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, about ways in which current systems function and how they might be improved in regard to ACData. In addition, she will discuss with Ms. Coffey the needs that were articulated at the lunch, to which Professor Hansen had referred.

Turning to the topic of the committee’s recent meetings with tenure-track faculty members, Professor Hansen noted that some colleagues had asked about the status of the request that the college reimburse faculty for childcare expenses incurred on evenings when faculty meetings are held. Professor Sitze suggested that providing support for eldercare that is needed during faculty meetings should also be considered. The dean said that there might be logistical challenges surrounding the implementation of such a program and noted that reimbursements of this kind would be considered income and would be taxable. Professor Hansen suggested that, if a program is put in

place, the processing of reimbursements could be streamlined by having faculty members submit requests for reimbursement at the end of each semester, rather than after each faculty meeting.

Continuing with the conversation about the committee's meetings with tenure-track faculty, Professor Sitze noted that the topic of standardizing the process for evaluating teaching was raised. Faculty members who spoke to this issue seemed eager for the college to adopt a standard end-of-semester course evaluation form across departments. The dean noted that Hari Stephen Kumar, director of instructional and curricular design services and associate director of the teaching and learning collaborative, working in close collaboration with last year's Committee of Six, developed a teaching evaluation form with this goal in mind. It was shared with the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and with tenure-track colleagues, and their feedback was incorporated. As part of a pilot process, four faculty members (both tenured and tenure track) used the pilot form last spring, and six faculty members (also both tenured and tenure track) used it this fall. The Department of American Studies will use the pilot form this spring. Mr. Kumar plans to begin to evaluate the process and the form by conducting focus groups with students who participated in the pilot and engaging in conversations with faculty-participants about what they found most useful about the process, including the form. Dean Epstein expressed support for having a common evaluation form. She noted that the new form is one part of a larger process of reconceiving the evaluation of teaching. The pilot is a time-intensive educational process that involves Mr. Kumar working with each faculty member, visiting his or her class at the beginning and middle of the semester to discuss the process with students, and reviewing feedback that the faculty member receives at the end of the semester. At this time, it seems premature to roll out the process fully, as the pilot is still ongoing, she noted. The dean said that she will speak with Mr. Kumar to learn more about his plans.

Professor Call asked if it is envisioned that individuals or departments could add questions to the pilot evaluation form. The dean said that it is possible to do so, but may not be advisable, she understands, as the questions on the pilot form are being crafted with great care. Professor Hansen expressed concern about the possibility of too much uniformity, if a common form is adopted across the college. For example, questions about the teaching of a lecture class should likely be different from those about a seminar. President Martin said that it is her understanding that the pilot form provides a menu of questions and different pathways for different kinds of courses, and students are guided through the form, and are asked to answer different types of questions, based on the type of course that they are evaluating.

Conversation turned to the committee's November 14 meeting with the Consultative Group for Tenure-Track Faculty (Professors Ellen Boucher, Jeeyon Jeong, Ingrid Nelson, and Jason Robinson). Professor Hart attended this meeting, and Professor Frank, who was not a member of the Committee of Six in the fall, did not. The [minutes of the meeting are attached here](#). Professor Hansen noted that, at the time of the meeting, the Consultative Group had met with only about one-quarter of the tenure-track faculty, so discussions among colleagues were at an early stage. He asked the dean and the president for their views of the role of the consultative group. The dean said that it is her understanding that the group, which was formed in fall 2016, functions as a representative body for tenure-track faculty and serves as a conduit for communication with the administration. The group is also building strong relationships within the tenure-track faculty. President Martin agreed.

After noting that the current members of the Consultative Group have conveyed their preference that the body become a standing committee of the faculty, the committee discussed the advantages and disadvantages of moving forward with this change. As a matter of governance, the committee noted that, if tenure-track faculty decide that they want a standing committee, a proposal

would need to be brought forward to the Committee of Six for review, and then brought to the full faculty for a vote. The dean informed the members that last year's Committee of Six had thought that it would be best that the consultative body be in place for at least a year before any such proposal came before the faculty. The members noted that, to become a standing committee, the group would need a charge, and decisions would be required regarding how the committee would be constituted, membership, the term of service, and how the committee would function. Professor Van Compernelle suggested that the case for forming a standing committee could be made by arguing that it would serve the greater good, like any committee. Dean Epstein commented that last year's Committee of Six expressed some reservations about creating a standing committee, one of which was that a division between tenured and untenured faculty might occur. It is ideal that all faculty think of themselves as citizens of the college, it was agreed. Still, last year's committee had remained open to the idea of a standing committee, if tenure-track faculty express a preference for this structure. The members agreed that the Consultative Group is doing important work that should be recognized. Some members of the committee did not think it would be beneficial to excuse those who serve on this body from other committee service, however, while others felt that it would be appropriate to do so. Professor Moss noted the benefits of tenure-track faculty serving on committees with tenured faculty. A member of the Consultative Group could be given an additional assignment on a standing committee that is not onerous, she noted. The committee agreed that being a member of the Consultative Group should be recognized as part of a tenure-track faculty member's record of service, beginning in the 2017–2018 academic year, and expressed the view that efforts should be made to raise awareness of the group's work among the faculty. Both the committee of six and the current consultative group agree that the Consultative Group should not be seen as a mechanism for advocacy—a potential danger—but as a body that serves a broader purpose at the college. The committee concluded that it would be best at present that the ad hoc structure of a consultative group remain in place.

Returning to the topic of issues of concern raised by some tenure-track faculty members, Professor Moss asked the president and the dean if consistent guidance is given about how a candidate should explain to those who are charged with evaluating his or her record an extension of his or her tenure clock that has resulted from one or more leaves—including medical and parenting leaves and leaves of absence. Some tenure-track faculty members have also asked how such leaves are taken into account and/or perceived by departments, the Committee of Six, the administration, and external reviewers. President Martin and Dean Epstein suggested that a leave could simply be noted on the candidate's CV. Additional information is not expected, and no burden of explanation is or should be placed on the candidate. The standard for tenure remains the same no matter the length of the clock, the president and dean emphasized. If it would be helpful, President Martin noted, a statement along the following lines could be conveyed to all tenure candidates and those charged with evaluating their files, including department members, external reviewers, and members of the Committee of Six: "At Amherst, faculty members typically stand for tenure after completing ten semesters of teaching, excluding any authorized leaves."

Concluding this second conversation about issues of concern expressed by some tenure-track faculty, the members noted that some colleagues conveyed that it would be helpful to expand the orientation program for new faculty members to include sessions that focus on "nuts and bolts." Potential topics, Professor Van Compernelle noted, might include how to use Moodle and ACData, expectations regarding grading, possible policies regarding students missing class, the mechanics of advising (in the spring), and cultural norms and practices—for example, even something as simple as

informing new colleagues that everyone is welcome to join those having lunch at the round tables in Lewis-Sebring. Professor Sitze commented that reading and discussing the American Association of University Professors' [1915](#) and [1940](#) statements on academic freedom, as well as [The Amherst College Statement of Academic and Expressive Freedom](#), should be part of orientation, serving as a foundation of conversations about shared governance at the college. President Martin asked whether having a presentation on a day in the life of an Amherst faculty member might be beneficial. Professor Hansen suggested providing more information to chairs to share with new colleagues. Dean Epstein said that her office would work to incorporate these helpful suggestions into the orientation program.

Professor Call next asked the dean about the status of the compensation proposal for chairs of departments and programs. Dean Epstein said that it is her hope to return to a discussion of this topic with the committee before spring break or immediately after, if she receives approval to move forward with a proposal as part of the budget process. It is her hope to institute the compensation program in 2017–2018, if she receives authorization to do so.

After a discussion of their impressions of a piece titled [“Behind Ugly Locker-Room Talk, Divisions of Class and Race,”](#) which had been published on February 19 in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the members turned to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twentieth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, February 27, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The members discussed a proposal from the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) to shift stewardship of the college calendar from the College Council to the CEP, in consultation with the registrar. (See [Professor Hall’s letter of January 30, 2017, to the Committee of Six.](#)) The College Council had recommended this change. The Committee of Six expressed support for the proposal, including the CEP’s request that it be given discretion to ask the Committee of Six to establish an ad hoc committee that would be charged with formulating a college calendar, when deemed necessary. The Committee of Six agreed with the CEP that the membership of such an ad hoc committee should include at least one student and one faculty member of the CEP. Under the CEP’s proposal, calendars developed by such an ad hoc committee would come before the CEP for approval first, then be forwarded to the Committee of Six, and finally be brought to the full faculty for a vote. The members agreed that, since implementation of the calendar proposal would require a revision to the charge of the CEP, a motion to make this change should be brought to the faculty for a vote at the next faculty meeting. The members then turned briefly to a personnel matter.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Moss reminded Dean Epstein about the question of whether the college will reimburse faculty members for childcare expenses that they incur in order to attend faculty meetings. Dean Epstein said that she is conducting some research and considering this issue. Continuing with questions, Professor Sitze asked whether the college has a policy regarding unauthorized recordings in classrooms. The dean, who commented that it is her understanding that this issue is covered under the honor code, said that surreptitious recording is illegal in Massachusetts (under the wire-tapping statute). If the other person knows about the recording at the time that it is being made, then it is not a violation of Massachusetts law. While it was noted that the honor code may cover this issue, the members asked if statements could be added to the code to increase awareness among students that they may not record professors or classroom activities unless the professor is informed and consent is given for the recording. In addition, the committee felt that it would be helpful to inform students through a statement in the honor code that, if a student is given permission to record a class for his or her own use, the student may not share the recording with anyone else without the permission of the faculty member. President Martin suggested that a form be created that students and faculty members could sign regarding permission to record and the terms of the permission. If a student shared a recording without permission to do so, it would be a violation of the honor code, she noted. The members agreed that such a form would be helpful, and the dean said that she would speak with Justin Smith, associate general counsel, about the issues that the committee had raised.

The members next discussed a revised draft of the dean’s letter to the chairs of departments with tenure candidates and a draft of a sample letter of solicitation to outside reviewers, and a number of revisions were suggested.

The Committee considered a proposal from the College Council to discuss the honor code. Dean Epstein noted that the College Council had provided opportunities for faculty and students to offer feedback on its proposal through open meetings held during the fall 2016 semester. Based on feedback received, the council had revised its proposal. As a general matter, Professor Van Compernelle wondered what the mechanisms are for ensuring that students read and understand the honor code, expressing the view that the college should be proactive in regard to introducing

students to the honor code, given the implications of violating it. It was noted that, at the start of every semester, faculty are responsible for explaining to their students the implications for each course of the [Statement of Intellectual Responsibility](#). Members noted that, in practice, this typically involves a discussion of plagiarism rather than the honor code in its entirety. The dean said that she would check with Chief Student Affairs Officer Suzanne Coffey about the ways in which new students are introduced to the honor code. After a conversation about the proposed code, during which the members made suggestions and raised questions about some sections, the members agreed that it would be helpful for the Committee of Six to meet with the College Council to discuss the proposal. The members decided to send some questions to the College Council in advance of the meeting, enabling the council to have some time to consider the Committee of Six's views. At the committee's request, the dean agreed to invite the College Council to meet after spring break and to forward the members' questions and recommendations.

Conversation turned to the College Council's proposal to revise its charge. The committee continued to express reservations about the proposed structure and the proposed mechanism for selecting student-members, which relies on appointment by the Association of Amherst Students (AAS), rather than student-wide elections for at least some members. The Committee of Six suggested that student-wide elections would likely enhance the diversity of the College Council by expanding the student body's access to service on the council. The committee also expressed concern, once again, about the balance of faculty members in relation to the number of student members; under the proposal, there would be six student members (five with vote), three members from the administration (two with vote), and three voting faculty members. It was noted that, under the proposal, the number of voting members from the student body would equal the combined number from the faculty and administration. The members agreed that, during the upcoming meeting with the College Council about the honor code, the committee should also ask the College Council about its rationale for proposing that there be an equal number of voting members from the student body as from the faculty and administration combined. Beyond the balance of the constituencies, the members noted that the size of the College Council would be quite large, under the proposal. The Committee of Six expressed its appreciation for the College Council's hard work on these issues and the time that they have spent considering these very important matters. The members commented that they are look forward to their discussion with the council this spring.

The members returned briefly to the topic of efforts that are under way to develop a common teaching evaluation form that could be used across departments. The dean said that she has spoken with hari stephen kumar, director of instructional and curricular design services, who, at this time, anticipates that the form could be available for use by departments and individual faculty members in fall 2017. Mr. kumar would be happy to work with faculty members who wish to add questions to the standard form, the dean noted. The members suggested that the dean provide information about the form to department chairs and to new faculty during their orientation, and she agreed to do so. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twenty-first meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, March 6, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Dean Epstein informed the members that the date has now been set for this year’s Lazerowitz Lecture, which Professor Grobe will deliver on Tuesday, April 11, 2017, at 5:00 P.M., in Beneski Earth Sciences Building’s Paino Lecture Hall. The title of his talk is “Confession in the Age of Aggregation: Art, Politics, and the Self of Social Media.” Following up on Professor Van Compernelle’s recent suggestion that the college be proactive and thoughtful about the ways in which students are introduced to the honor code, Dean Epstein next reported that Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, has informed her that the College Council will soon meet with Professor López, dean of new students, to discuss the council’s proposal to have the signing of the honor code become a more significant event during orientation.

Conversation returned to the topic of the college’s process for informing faculty about educational accommodations for students. In response to a request for information, Ms. Coffey informed the dean that Amherst students are required to engage in an interactive process in order to use their accommodations, and that students may choose to inform some or all of their professors about some or all of the accommodations to which the student is entitled. Students must have a conversation with each professor about the logistics of implementing accommodations in that professor’s class. Ms. Coffey explained that students have the ability to choose whether to inform all or just some of their professors about accommodations. Students may also choose whether to have some or all of their accommodations listed on ACData.

Continuing the discussion, Professor Moss expressed the view that the process that Ms. Coffey had described may not represent best practice. Professor Hansen noted that it is essential that faculty members learn about students’ accommodations at the start of the semester, in order to be able to meet the college’s responsibility to provide “reasonable” accommodations. Though he understands the need for privacy, Professor Hansen continued, in his experience, students do not take offense when he has contacted them about their accommodations and discussed with them their expectations and needs in regard to his courses. Nonetheless, he feels that a formal, clear policy that outlines the responsibilities of students and faculty is needed. Professor Hansen further noted that, at times, it might not be possible to provide a reasonable accommodation—for example, there might be safety issues that cannot be overcome in a lab environment. He reiterated that the college should take steps to create a testing center, which would lessen the burdens on students and faculty. Professor Call concurred that a testing center is needed. Professor Frank agreed, commenting that the college does not seem to be meeting the needs of all students—from the accessibility of the campus to providing the tools that students need to be successful at Amherst. President Martin agreed that the issue of staffing needs to be examined, along with other resources that may be needed. She and the dean will discuss this topic with the senior staff.

The committee asked the dean about the status of forming a committee to address issues of accessibility at Amherst. Dean Epstein responded that the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force is taking the lead regarding the college’s efforts around accessibility. Professor Frank expressed the view that, rather than simply being added to the work being undertaken by the Diversity and

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Inclusion Task Force, the issue of accessibility merits its own separate task force. Professor Moss urged that there be a faculty, student, and staff conversation about issues of disability and inclusion and efforts to transform the culture at Amherst, with the goal of creating a more inclusive and accessible community at the college. Dean Epstein said that she will speak with Ms. Coffey and with Norm Jones, chief diversity and inclusion officer, about moving forward with forming a separate task force to focus on issues of access and disability.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Hansen asked, on behalf of a colleague, if progress has been made on selecting a new name for the Lord Jeffery Inn. President Martin said that the process is ongoing.

Continuing with questions, Professor Moss commented that some tenure-track faculty members have voiced the concern that there might be a “retention crisis” involving Amherst faculty in STEM fields. She asked if faculty in STEM fields have left the college more often than faculty in other disciplines over the past ten years. Professor Hansen wondered whether experimental scientists with research labs may face particular challenges earning tenure at Amherst, even in comparison with other STEM faculty members who are not experimentalists. Dean Epstein responded that she could not discuss the details of individual cases for reasons of confidentiality, but noted that untenured colleagues most frequently make the decision to leave Amherst because of the need to accommodate a spouse or partner, or for other family, as well as professional, reasons. Professor Call wondered whether it might be more challenging for the college to make a commitment to accommodating partners of faculty in STEM fields—providing a visiting position for a time, for example—if the partners are also in these fields. He noted the expensive nature of space and start-up costs in STEM disciplines as a factor. The dean commented that the number of faculty who have left the college is relatively small, which makes it difficult to make inferences about causes or patterns.

Dean Epstein offered data to inform the conversation. She noted the total number of faculty who have left Amherst in the last sixteen years, as well as the number of pre-tenure departures beginning in 2001. The dean commented that, of the 115 tenure-track faculty hired between July 1, 2001, and July 1, 2016, thirty-eight are in STEM, or 33 percent. STEM here includes biology/neuroscience, chemistry, computer science, geology, mathematics and statistics, physics and astronomy, and psychology/neuroscience, she explained. She noted that forty-nine faculty members out of the 115 who were hired have stood for tenure, and forty-three have been awarded tenure, or 87.8 percent. Of the forty-nine, fifteen are in STEM fields, as defined above. Of the fifteen in STEM standing for tenure, 80 percent received tenure. Of those standing for tenure in lab STEM fields (all STEM fields with the exception of mathematics and statistics and computer science), eight out of eleven, 72.7 percent, received tenure. In comparison, of the faculty members from non-STEM fields who stood for tenure, thirty-one out of thirty-four, 91.2 percent, received tenure. Of the six faculty members who have been denied tenure, three are in STEM. Continuing, the dean said that twenty-four tenure-track faculty members hired between 2001 and 2016 have left or are leaving the college, fifteen before reappointment (thirteen in their first two years and two in their third year, but before reappointment), and nine after reappointment, but before tenure (four to six years at the college). Eight of the thirteen leaving in their first two years and one of the two leaving in their third year are from STEM fields. Six of these nine are lab scientists. Two of the nine leaving after reappointment are from lab STEM.

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In total, eleven of those leaving before standing for tenure are from STEM. Eight in lab STEM fields (again defined as all STEM fields with the exception of mathematics and computer science) have departed or will be departing from the college. The remaining forty-two of the 115 tenure-track faculty hired between 2001 and 2016 are still at the college but not yet tenured.

Some members of the committee concluded that the data suggest that there are disparities in retention, including tenure rates, for faculty in STEM fields at Amherst, in particular among lab scientists at the college, in comparison to Amherst faculty in other fields. However, since the number of faculty leaving the college before the time of tenure review, and the number being denied tenure, is relatively small, some members agreed with the dean that it is difficult to identify causes or patterns. Professor Call commented that it is important to recognize that the retention or departure of a single STEM faculty member would change the cited percentages significantly. Professor Hansen noted, however, that while the numbers are indeed small, a disproportionate number of STEM faculty do seem to be leaving the college.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Call noted he is grateful to Dean Epstein for sharing the more detailed information he had requested relative to the departure dates of tenure-track faculty. Professor Call noted that the academic job market in some areas has changed in recent years, and those changes are evident in the recent increase in the number of departures of tenure-track faculty. Of the fifteen tenure-track faculty who have left Amherst before reappointment in the last sixteen years, ten have left in the last three years, and of those ten, eight have been in STEM or economics. Of the nine tenure-track faculty who have left or are leaving Amherst after reappointment in the past sixteen years, four are in the last three years, and three are from STEM fields or economics. Professor Call noted the considerable efforts that Dean Epstein has made to recruit faculty in these areas, but he remarked that there are “market forces” that present challenges for Amherst (and all institutions) when it comes to recruiting and retaining tenure-track faculty members in the fields of economics, mathematics, statistics and computer science, in particular, and among the STEM fields more broadly. There is more competition and student demand for faculty in these fields, and faculty in some of these fields (notably computer science, economics, and statistics) draw the highest salaries at the time of hiring. Professor Call said that, while he appreciates the college’s efforts to stay competitive in regard to faculty salaries, more resources should be devoted to the recruitment and retention of faculty in STEM fields and economics, in his view. It may no longer be possible, he commented, to maintain the same relative level of equity in salaries across disciplines at the college. With increasing student demand, more faculty are needed in STEM and economics, as current working conditions may be overwhelming for some faculty and present an impediment to success on many levels. In his view, in the near term Amherst should be building a faculty that remains stable in regard to the number of FTEs in most areas, but that growth in regard to new hires should occur in the fields where the Amherst faculty is currently overburdened, so that student demand, and the burdens on faculty, can be moderated. He noted that, Amherst faculty in these fields—depending on the department and in comparison to other disciplines—often teach a larger number of students, with a great number of associated contact hours, and are under greater pressure to incorporate students into their research as a part of their teaching.

Dean Epstein commented that Amherst has been able to hire excellent STEM faculty and has been offering generous salaries as part of recruitment and retention efforts. She noted that some

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of the faculty are so strong that, after they arrive, they are presented with other options. The dean sees having these colleagues at Amherst as a success, for whatever period of time that they are here. In most cases, moving to another institution is only a realistic possibility for a STEM faculty member during the period before tenure, she commented. The dean noted that no tenured STEM faculty member hired in the last sixteen years (2001–2016) has left the college. Professor Call noted that faculty may leave for good reasons, but that the college should examine whether there is a “push” as well as a “pull” that is particularly strong for faculty in STEM and economics.

Professor Call urged the president and the dean to aspire to compete with research universities when hiring and retaining the finest faculty. They agreed that this should be Amherst’s goal, while noting that creating wider gaps and great inequity among faculty in different fields comes at some cost. Professor Van Compernelle expressed the view that Amherst should set its sights high and be as competitive as possible when hiring faculty. The college should ensure that Amherst faculty have the resources that they need to do the kind research that they wish to do, he commented. In addition, the extra burdens that STEM faculty bear should be addressed, the members agreed. If more resources are needed to support faculty in lab fields and in economics and computer science, Professor Call said that he supports providing them.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Hansen noted that, in his experience, the ability to think creatively about spousal accommodations is critical to recruiting and retaining STEM faculty. At times, in addition to financial resources, flexibility is needed. He noted that, at present, because of Amherst’s schedule and teaching expectations, a lab scientist must spend most of his or her time on campus, making it virtually impossible to teach fewer days a week and to be on campus for less time. Thus commuting to Amherst from a distance can be a real challenge for a lab scientist. Continuing, he noted that, in addition lab scientists are expected to work with thesis and underclass research students in the summer and during Interterm—that is, to teach twelve months a year. This significant teaching responsibility is essentially unrecognized by the administration, in his view. Professor Moss expressed the view that the college should do more to learn about the experiences of STEM faculty, and whether there are ways to improve the experiences that these faculty are having at Amherst. She noted that, as the college moves close to opening a state-of-the-art science center, it seems particularly important to examine this difficult set of issues. Recruiting and retaining a stellar STEM faculty is at the core of the college’s effort to remain a leader in undergraduate science education, all agreed. President Martin suggested that, in addition to exploring the issues that had been raised about salaries, teaching loads, enrollments, and spousal and partner accommodations, more information should be gathered about the full spectrum of variables—for example, whether the college’s hiring processes are resulting in bringing the best faculty to Amherst. In addition, the president continued, questions about the strength of departmental cultures should be asked. The quality of departmental cultures can be the biggest determinant of whether faculty members stay or leave an institution, the president commented. The members agreed that the college faces myriad issues in this area, and that attention to the questions that have been identified is critical.

Discussion turned to a revised draft of the dean’s letter to the chairs of departments with tenure candidates and a revised draft of a sample letter of solicitation to outside reviewers and

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finalized the two documents. The members also reviewed draft letters to candidates for promotion to full professor and to chairs of such candidates. The committee discussed possible revisions and agreed to review the letters again at the members' next meeting.

The members next reviewed three motions that had been forwarded from the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP). (A day after the Committee of Six's discussion, an incongruity in the language of the charge of the CEP involving the secretary of that committee came to light. The CEP then reviewed the charge and its original motion and recommended an additional revision to the charge, which appears in the final version of the motion in these minutes. In addition, following the Committee of Six's review of the CEP's two other motions, which focused on revisions to the language in the *Amherst College Catalog*, the members agreed that the CEP should be asked to revise some of the proposed language to enhance clarity. The CEP subsequently provided revised motions. After each member of the Committee of Six reviewed the revised motions, the Committee of Six voted on them via email. The final versions of the motions appear here, as do the votes taken via email. A final letter about the two catalog motions from David Hall, chair of the CEP, is linked from these minutes as well.)

The members considered the following motion, noting [the related letter of January 30, 2017, from Professor Hall](#), as well as the recommendation that it had received from the College Council, and voted six in favor and zero opposed on the substance of the motion and six in favor and zero opposed to forward it to the faculty.

The Committee of Six supports the recommendation of the College Council and the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) that oversight of the college calendar shift from the College Council to the CEP, in consultation with the registrar. To effect this change, the Committee of Six proposes the revision below (in red) to the charge of the CEP in the [Faculty Handbook IV., S., 1., i.](#) In addition, the Committee of Six supports the CEP's proposed revision (in red below) to correct contradictory language about the CEP secretary.

i. *The Committee on Educational Policy* (voted by the faculty, December 2006). The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) is composed of five faculty members, each serving a three-year term; the dean of the faculty, ex officio, without vote; and three student members, each serving a two-year term. The humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences must be represented on the committee, by both faculty members and student members. Each year the committee chooses its own chair and secretary from among its five faculty members. A researcher appointed by the dean of the faculty informs and supports the work of the CEP ~~and serves as committee secretary~~. The chair sets the committee's agenda. Nominations of the faculty members for the Committee on Educational Policy are made by the Committee of Six and reported to the faculty in advance of the faculty meeting at which they are to be elected.

Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the meeting. Candidates must receive the approval of a majority of the eligible voting members of the faculty present at the meeting in order to be elected. Ideally, two members of the Committee on

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Educational Policy should be elected in two out of three years, and one member elected in the third. In this way, overlapping terms will create a continuity of membership. The student members of the committee are elected for two-year terms, two members being elected in one year, and a third in the other, alternately.

All members of the faculty are eligible to serve on the Committee on Educational Policy, with the same exceptions as govern eligibility for the Committee of Six.

The Committee on Educational policy is expected to review and evaluate, and to report to the faculty on, the general educational policy of the college; to consider suggestions from departments or from individual faculty members or students relating to changes in educational policy, including proposals for new courses, new programs, and altered major programs or honors requirements; and to make recommendations to the Committee of Six and the faculty. The Committee on Educational Policy advises the president and the dean of the faculty about the allocation of faculty positions to departments. In making recommendations for such allocations, the committee considers, inter alia, the curricular needs of individual departments and the commitment of departments to offer courses that meet identified college-wide priorities and curricular needs. **THE CEP ALSO MAINTAINS THE COLLEGE CALENDAR, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE REGISTRAR AND SUBJECT TO THE ULTIMATE APPROVAL OF THE FACULTY.**

Turning to the two remaining motions, Dean Epstein informed the members that the changes in policy being proposed by the CEP had originated with the Curriculum Committee and had been vetted thoroughly by the CEP and the class deans, as well as the Curriculum Committee itself. To offer context, the president and the dean reminded the committee that the examination of these and other policies had been prompted by concerns raised during *Amherst Uprising*. Specifically, at a meeting that the dean had organized last November for faculty and students to discuss the academic workload, some students had spoken about the pressures of the workload, and had communicated the need for greater flexibility in regard to particular policies. Following the meeting, it had been agreed that the Curriculum Committee and the CEP should explore ways to support students by reviewing some of the more rigid policies that had been described. In [his \(revised\) letter of March 11, 2017](#), Professor Hall described the CEP's rationale for proposing the changes described in the motions. After a detailed review of the language being proposed, the Committee of Six indicated support for most of the substance of the proposals, but, found some of the language to be confusing and felt that the clarity of the motions should be enhanced. It was agreed that the CEP should be asked to revise the language and should feel free to re-write paragraphs, if need be, rather than taking an incremental approach. The members said that, after reviewing the new language, they would likely support bringing the motions before the faculty for a vote. The members later voted via email (as noted above) six in favor and zero opposed on content, and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the following two motions to the faculty:

As recommended by the Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Educational Policy

(CEP), the Committee of Six proposes the following revision, to become effective in the 2017–2018 academic year, to the language of the *Amherst College Catalog* on page sixty-nine of the current catalog, as indicated below in red:

EXAMINATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Examinations are held at the end of each semester and at intervals in the year in many courses. At the end of each semester, final grades are reported and the record for the semester is closed. In conformity with the practice established by the Faculty, no extension of time is allowed for intraterm papers, examinations and incomplete laboratory or other course work beyond the date of the last scheduled class period of the semester, unless an extension is granted in writing by both the instructor and the class dean. Students will not be allowed to register or participate in add/drop for the subsequent term until all grades from their last semester are recorded by the Registrar.

A student who ~~CANNOT is prevented by illness from~~ attending a ~~semester FINAL~~ examination may be granted the privilege of a ~~special MAKE-UP~~ examination by the instructor ~~and IN CONSULTATION WITH~~ the class dean, who will arrange the date of the examination with the instructor. ~~There are no second or make-up semester examinations, unless a student is prevented by illness from taking such an examination at the scheduled time.~~

~~A semester FINAL~~ examination may be postponed only by approval of the instructor and the class dean.

~~Only for medical reasons or those of grave personal emergency will extensions be granted beyond the second day after the examination period.~~ EXTENSIONS MAY BE GRANTED BEYOND THE FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE INSTRUCTOR AND THE CLASS DEAN. IN SUCH CASES, THE INSTRUCTOR MUST SUBMIT A REQUEST FOR EXTENSION TO THE OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS BY THE END-OF-SEMESTER GRADING DEADLINE. THE REQUEST SHALL INDICATE THE EXTENSION DEADLINE AND A DEFAULT GRADE, WHICH THE REGISTRAR RECORDS ONLY IF THE INSTRUCTOR DOES NOT SUBMIT A FINAL GRADE BY THE EXTENSION DEADLINE. THE REGISTRAR SHALL RECORD THE INCOMPLETE NOTATION "I" DURING THE EXTENSION.

As recommended by the Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), the Committee of Six proposes the following revision, to become effective in the 2017–2018 academic year, to the language of the *Amherst College Catalog* on pages seventy-three to seventy-four of the current catalog, as indicated below in red:

Degree Requirements BACHELOR OF ARTS

THE DEGREE Bachelor of Arts is conferred upon students who have satisfactorily met the requirements described below. The plan of studies leading to this degree is arranged on the basis of the equivalent of an eight-semester course of study to be pursued by students in residence at Amherst College.

The degree Bachelor of Arts *cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, or *summa cum laude* (Degree with Honors) is awarded to students who have successfully completed an approved program of Honors work with a department or program.

Other students who satisfactorily meet requirements as indicated below receive the degree, Bachelor of Arts, *rite*.

REQUIREMENTS

Each student is responsible for meeting all degree requirements and for ensuring that the Registrar's Office has received all credentials.

The Bachelor of Arts degree is awarded to students who:

1. Complete 32 full semester courses *and* four years (eight semesters) of residence. ~~*,* except that a student who has dropped a course without penalty during the first year, or who has failed a course during the first or second year, shall be allowed to graduate provided he or she has been four years in residence at the College and has satisfactorily completed 31 full courses.~~

[new paragraph]

Transfer students must complete 32 full semester courses or their equivalent, at least 16 ~~of them~~ at Amherst, and ~~HAVE BEEN IN at least two years of~~ residence at Amherst; ~~FOR AT LEAST TWO YEARS (FOUR SEMESTERS).~~ ~~except that a transfer student who has dropped a course without penalty during his or her first semester at Amherst shall be allowed to graduate with one less full course.~~

~~STUDENTS WHO HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM OR FAILED ONE COURSE DURING ANY SEMESTER EXCEPT THE LAST TWO (FINAL YEAR) SHALL BE ALLOWED TO GRADUATE WITH 31 FULL COURSES OR THEIR EQUIVALENT, PROVIDED THAT THEY HAVE MET THE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT.~~

~~*In exceptional cases, a student with at least six semesters of residence at Amherst and at least 24 courses, excluding summer school courses not taken as make-up work or recognized as part of a transfer record, may apply for early graduation. Students seeking to graduate before they have satisfied the normal 32-course requirement will have the quality of their achievement thoroughly evaluated. The approval of the student's advisor, department, the Dean of Faculty, the Committee of Six, and finally the Faculty must be received to be granted the status of candidate for the degree.~~

2. Complete the requirements for a major in a department or a group of departments, including a satisfactory performance in the comprehensive

evaluation. Standard full courses are equal to four semester credits each. Half courses are equal to two semester credits. Our course system considers all standard full courses to have equal weight toward completing the degree requirements. Courses typically meet for three hours a week, with the expectation that an additional nine hours of academic engagement be spent in class, lab, discussion, studio, film viewing, and/or preparatory work.

3. Attain a general average of 6 in the courses completed at Amherst and a grade of at least C in every course completed at another institution for transfer credit to Amherst.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All students except Independent Scholars are required to elect four full courses each semester and may elect an additional half course. The election of a half course in addition to the normal program is at the discretion of the student and without special permission. A student may not elect more than one half course in any semester except by consent of ~~his or her~~ THE class dean and the departments concerned. In such cases the student's program will be three full courses and two half courses. Half courses are not normally included in the 32-course requirement for graduation.

A student may combine two half courses to be counted as equivalent to a full course if (1) the student~~s~~ completes 4.5 courses in one semester and 3.5 courses in a subsequent semester, and the two halves match in a manner designated by the offering department, and with permission of the academic advisor; or (2) the halves match within the same semester in a manner designated by the offering department, and with permission of the academic advisor and the class dean. No more than four half courses may be so combined for credit toward the degree.

In exceptional cases a student may, with the permission of both ~~his or her~~ THE STUDENT'S academic advisor and class dean, take five full courses for credit during a given semester. Such permission is normally granted only to students of demonstrated superior academic ability, responsibility, and will. Fifth courses cannot be used to accelerate graduation. On occasion, a student who has failed a course may be permitted to take a fifth course in a given semester if, in the judgment of the Committee on Academic Standing, this additional work can be undertaken without prejudice to the student's regular program. Students may only retake a course for which they have received a failing grade or from which they have withdrawn in a prior semester.

A student who by failing a course incurs a deficiency in the number of courses required for normal progress toward graduation is usually expected to make up that course deficiency by taking a three- or four-semester hour course at

another approved institution during the summer prior to the first semester of the next academic year and no later than the semester prior to the student's last semester at Amherst.

~~A student~~ may not add ~~a course to his/her program~~ after the last day of add/drop at the beginning of each semester or drop ~~a course~~ after this date except as follows:

~~IN ANY SEMESTER PRIOR TO THE FINAL YEAR, A STUDENT WHO HAS EXHAUSTED ALL ACADEMIC RESOURCES (E.G., MET WITH THE PROFESSOR DURING OFFICE HOURS, RECEIVED TUTORING, MET WITH THE CLASS DEANS, ETC.), MAY BE ALLOWED TO WITHDRAW FROM A COURSE WITHOUT PENALTY AND GRADUATE WITH 31 COURSES. THIS EXCEPTION MAY BE INVOKED ONLY ONCE, AND REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE INSTRUCTOR, ADVISOR, AND CLASS DEAN. THE DEADLINE FOR WITHDRAWAL REQUESTS IS THE END OF THE TENTH WEEK OF THE SEMESTER. First-year students who experience severe academic difficulty may petition the Dean of New Students for permission to drop one course without penalty during their first year. The Dean of New Students, in consultation with the instructor and advisor, will decide on the basis of the student's educational needs whether or not to grant the petition. Petitions to withdraw from a course will normally be accepted only during the sixth, seventh, and eighth weeks of either the first or the second semester. Exceptions to this rule~~ FURTHER EXCEPTIONS shall be made only for disabling medical reasons or FOR reasons of grave personal emergency, and shall be made ~~only~~ by the CLASS Dean ~~of New Students~~.

ALL COURSE DEFICIENCIES MUST BE MADE UP PRIOR TO THE FIRST SEMESTER OF THE FINAL YEAR, EXCEPT THOSE ARISING IN THE FINAL YEAR, IN WHICH CASE THEY MUST BE MADE UP PRIOR TO GRADUATION. ALL MAKE-UP COURSES MUST BE APPROVED IN ADVANCE BY THE REGISTRAR.

~~Transfer students may petition their class dean to drop one course without penalty during the sixth, seventh, and eighth weeks of their first semester at Amherst. They must follow the petition procedure described above. The class dean, in consultation with the student's instructor and advisor, will decide whether or not to grant this petition.~~

~~For sophomores, juniors, and seniors, exceptions to the rule prohibiting the dropping of a course after the ninth calendar day of the semester shall be made only for disabling medical reasons or reasons of grave personal emergency,~~

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~~and shall be made only by the Dean of Student Affairs in consultation with the student's class dean.~~

Courses taken by a student after withdrawing from Amherst College, as part of a graduate or professional program in which that student is enrolled, are not applicable toward an Amherst College undergraduate degree.

The members turned to a revised/final version of [the dean's proposal to support chairs of academic departments and programs](#) and discussed how best to facilitate a conversation with the faculty about the proposal. The dean reiterated that the goal of the proposed program is to strengthen shared governance at the college, which includes providing chairs with regular opportunities to learn more about best practices surrounding topics such as mentoring new colleagues, faculty searches, and administering and interpreting student evaluations, among other issues. These meetings would also provide new channels of communication between chairs and the dean of the faculty. She noted that Amherst is currently one of only a few remaining elite liberal arts colleges that expect chairs to do their work without compensation. The dean commented that the role of chairing has never been more important, especially since untenured colleagues now make up one-third of Amherst's faculty. The committee noted that, during its meetings with untenured faculty, many expressed concern that important processes and procedures are inconsistent among departments. The dean noted that the college currently does not have mechanisms in place to ensure that best practices are regularized and implemented comprehensively. She believes that a system of regular chairs' meetings would help the college move forward on many fronts. Nevertheless, she said that she has been reluctant to impose additional burdens on already taxed faculty members without offering some recognition of their workload. In addition, she is eager to have chairs serve at least two-year, and ideally three-year terms, to allow time for what is a steep learning curve and to encourage stability in chairing. This is important not only for untenured colleagues, but also for staff who report to chairs; staff are frustrated by the frequent transition of their chairs-supervisors, the dean commented. The dean's plan calls for providing an honorarium to faculty each year that they chair. Due to the importance of chairs' work with new faculty, this proposal is the dean's highest budget priority for fiscal year 2018, she noted.

Professor Van Compernelle said that, while he applauds the spirit of the proposal, he remains unconvinced that funding would offer relief from the burdens of chairing, which is the real problem in his view. The proposal actually requires chairs to devote more time to chairing as a result of the obligation to write an annual report and attend monthly meetings. Professors Call and Moss also expressed concern about these features of the plan. Having additional burdens would not help meet the goal of having chairs spend more time mentoring untenured faculty, Professor Van Compernelle commented. He would prefer having the option of course release. The dean reminded the committee that her earlier proposal had included the option of course release, and that some members had raised concerns surrounding equity for small departments. Moreover, providing a large cohort of chairs with course relief would make it impossible for most departments to mount majors, would result in too many faculty being out of the classroom, and would be too expensive, she noted. Professor Van Compernelle said that, if the choice is between the proposal and the status quo, he would prefer the status quo. Professor

Call agreed that the additional time commitment is a disincentive to support the plan. Professor Frank suggested that chairs be relieved from college-wide committee service. The dean said that she could consider the idea, but that it would be too challenging to implement at present, given the proportion of the faculty that is untenured. Professor Moss argued against placing additional burdens on untenured faculty. She said that she is not in favor of moving to an expected three-year term for chairs, which is the spirit of the proposal in her view. The dean noted that that proposal allows for flexibility when it comes to a two- or three-year term. President Martin expressed the view that it would be beneficial to have chairs help guide administrative decisions and play more of a role in the governance of the college. The president commented that enabling chairs to do their work more effectively and efficiently is a worthy goal. Professor Hansen agreed and proposed, given the above concerns raised by committee members, that the dean's program be launched as a pilot for a specific period of time.

The members suggested that the dean discuss the proposal at the next faculty meeting and answer the faculty's questions. Since the faculty cannot vote on its own compensation, there could be a motion brought forward to endorse the proposal. The dean agreed to the plan, and then the members voted three yes, two no, with one abstention, on content and six yes, zero no, to forward the motion (see below) to the faculty.

The faculty endorses [the dean of the faculty's proposal to support chairs of academic departments and programs.](#)

The members then approved a series of questions to share with the College Council about its proposal for an honor code, as well as comments to share with the council about its proposed revision to its charge. The committee felt that having these documents prior to meeting with the Committee of Six would be helpful to the council and would inform the upcoming conversation.

Following the meeting, after voting on the revised CEP motions via email, the committee voted, again via email, six in favor and zero opposed to forward to the faculty the agenda for a faculty meeting to be held March 21.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twenty-second meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, March 20, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with the president, the dean, and the Committee of Six offering congratulations to the women’s basketball team and Coach Gromacki for the team’s undefeated season and victory over Tufts to win the NCAA Division III national championship the previous Saturday.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Moss informed the members that students who are considering issues of accessibility on campus, wrote to her and asked that she forward [their request to meet with the Committee of Six](#) to the members, along with [two documents](#). The committee agreed to meet with the students and asked the dean to arrange the meeting. Dean Epstein agreed to do so and noted, in a related matter, that a Presidential Task Force on Accessibility and Inclusion will soon be formed; Jim Brassord, chief of campus operations, and Norm Jones, chief diversity and inclusion officer, will serve as co-chairs. Dean Epstein said that, once a draft charge for the task force is complete, she will share it with the Committee of Six. It is anticipated that the task force will start gathering data this spring and summer, will begin meeting regularly in fall 2017, and will continue its work for a three- to five-year period—after which this structure will be evaluated.

The committee then turned to its annual review of senior sabbatical fellowship proposals and voted to forward them to the Board of Trustees for approval. The committee agreed that, in the future, faculty members should be required to submit a report about their prior sabbatical as part of the process of applying for their next senior sabbatical.

The members next reviewed motions to dissolve the Doshisha Committee as a standing committee of the faculty and to have the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations and the Committee on International Education assume the responsibilities of the Doshisha Committee. The dean said that, before bringing this proposal to the Committee of Six, she had consulted with Professors Morse and Tawa, the current members of the Doshisha Committee, and the Committee on International Education. Everyone is supportive of the idea, given that the Doshisha Committee has a narrow charge, and because its responsibilities can be easily redistributed. This change will free up three faculty members for other service, the dean noted. It has been agreed that Professors Morse or Tawa will provide guidance to the Committee on International Education initially. The director of education abroad (currently Janna Behrens), an ex officio member of the committee, can then provide institutional memory in the future regarding the process for reviewing the applications for the faculty exchange with Doshisha University and making the final selection of the faculty member each year. The members offered enthusiastic support for the proposal and voted six in favor and zero opposed on content, and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the motions below to the faculty:

Motion from the Committee of Six

With the support of the Doshisha Committee and the Committee on International Education, the Committee of Six proposes that the Doshisha Committee be dissolved as a standing committee of the faculty and removed from the [Faculty Handbook IV., S., 1., h.](#) .

Under the Committee of Six's proposal, the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations and the Committee on International Education would assume the responsibilities of the Doshisha Committee. Responsibility for reviewing applications for the student Amherst Doshisha Fellow and making recommendations to the Amherst dean of the faculty would shift to the Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations. Responsibility for reviewing the applications for the faculty exchange (the Amherst-Doshisha Professorship) and making recommendations to the Amherst dean of the faculty would shift to the Committee on International Education (see the next motion). The charge of the Doshisha Committee appears below:

h. *The Doshisha Committee* (voted by the faculty, December 1994). The Doshisha Committee shall coordinate all formal relations between Amherst College and Doshisha University, including the selection of participants in the faculty exchange (the Amherst-Doshisha Professorship), and the selection of the Amherst-Doshisha Fellow. The committee shall also coordinate the selection of the Neesima and Uchimura Scholars with Doshisha University and the Amherst's Office of Admission.

The committee consists of three members of the faculty serving two-year terms. Members of the committee are selected by the Committee of Six.

Motion from the Committee of Six

With the support of the Doshisha Committee and the Committee on International Education, the Committee of Six proposes the following revision (in red) to the charge of the Committee on International Education at [Faculty Handbook IV., S., 1. m.](#):

m. *The Committee on International Education* The Committee on International Education is composed of three members of the faculty (each from a different department), one of whom will serve as chair, and the director of education abroad, dean for international students and global engagement (voted by the faculty November 2015),—and registrar, ex officio. The term for the faculty members of the committee is three years. Members of the committee and the committee's chair are appointed by the Committee of Six. The committee shapes policies and procedures for evaluating and approving study-abroad programs for Amherst students. The members maintain and review a list of college-approved study-abroad programs, review student petitions for study-abroad programs that are not already on the college-approved list, review student evaluations of all international educational programs, facilitate communication between the faculty and the director of education abroad to aid in advising, and consult with the director to identify new opportunities for international experiences and to facilitate student participation in them. **THE COMMITTEE REVIEWS APPLICATIONS FOR THE FACULTY EXCHANGE WITH DOSHISHA UNIVERSITY (THE AMHERST-DOSHISHA**

PROFESSORSHIP) AND MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS TO AMHERST'S
DEAN OF THE FACULTY.

The members turned to a personnel matter.

Prompted by recent events at Middlebury in which protesters had prevented Charles Murray from speaking with his audience on the campus of Middlebury College, and [a statement](#) that had followed from one hundred of its faculty that was published in the *Wall Street Journal*, the committee engaged in a far-reaching conversation that touched on many interrelated topics. While many questions were raised, few conclusions could be drawn—due to the complexity of the issues, and because Amherst is not facing a situation of this kind. Thus the members were left to raise possible scenarios and to discuss possible implications. It was agreed that this constraint contributed to a lack of context that made it difficult to make judgments. On the other hand, the committee felt that, in the contemporary political climate, it is very likely that an event such as the one at Middlebury could occur at Amherst, and that it is important to prepare and to consider possible responses. President Martin noted that the college has concrete plans in place that allow for peaceful, non-violent protest, while protecting the safety of the community. At other levels, there are many complexities and competing values that must be negotiated when it comes to this important and pressing issue, she said.

The conversation began with the committee expressing concern about the Middlebury statement and criticism of the view expressed in various op-eds that appeared after the incident. The thrust of these pieces was that the Middlebury students had violated the principles of free speech and had been unwilling to engage with ideas that differed from their own. While decrying the violence that had occurred at Middlebury, the committee discussed whether the academy may not be a place where every opinion is deserving of an audience, and whether a line should be drawn between opinion and knowledge. It was noted that some Middlebury students had raised pertinent questions about the speaker's credentials before and after his appearance on their campus, including whether his falsehoods were the kind of falsehoods that could contribute to the pursuit of truth. The members exchanged views on the distinction between free speech and academic speech, coming to a consensus that the latter can be thought of as speech that is—in some way or another, depending on the concrete particulars of specific academic disciplines, fields, and subfields—subject to some sort of distinction between the true and the false.

Discussion focused on whether it is possible or desirable for Amherst, as an academic space, to adopt a framework for deciding what sort of debates are appropriate to host on campus. Other topics discussed included where to draw the line between tolerable and intolerable speech; whether there should ever be occasions when it is appropriate to disinvite speakers with particular opinions or theories; whether any limits should be set on student groups' ability to invite speakers of their choice; forms of protest and counter-programming that might be adopted should an individual with extremely controversial views speak at Amherst; and preparations that should be considered in case such an event transpires. Much of the conversation involved an exchange of views about the distinction between freedom of speech and academic speech, with the members agreeing that considering the implications of that distinction—and trying to decide what the college would or should do in the abstract is deeply difficult.

As part of the discussion of circumstances under which some members of the community might favor disinviting a speaker, it was noted that institutions of higher learning offer spaces in which students and others can debate civilly and engage with ideas that they may find disturbing

and/or at odds with what they believe. While there may be some speakers who should not be permitted to address an academic community, President Martin noted that her threshold for disinviting a speaker is very high; if presented with the need to make a decision, she would err on the side of freedom of expression and would find it deeply problematic to disinvite a speaker, even if she herself found the individual's views to be odious. At the same time, the president said that she feels it would be legitimate for her to decline an invitation to introduce or otherwise authorize such a speaker. The committee agreed that doing so is within the president's purview, noting that this position is consistent with [AAUP guidance](#) on the topic of "Academic Freedom and Outside Speakers." The question of the level at which resources and support provided by the college may be viewed as an endorsement of a controversial speaker was discussed at length, with the members agreeing that the definition of what constitutes the imprimatur of the college is complicated.

Concluding the conversation, Professor Sitze observed that criticisms of political homogeneity on campus can be answered by pointing to the college's current approach of bringing conservative thinkers to campus who are more centrist in their views to speak and engage in debate. He suggested that, if a speaker comes to campus who has extreme and abhorrent views, it would be useful to offer "counter-programming." The idea would be that, instead of playing into the hands of critics who seek to "troll" college campuses by provoking predictable protests that then in turn create predictable backlashes, the college could offer alternate events that engage with repulsive speech in a way that is more intellectually attractive than repulsive speech. In most cases, he said, he agrees with the president that controversial speakers should be heard out and debated according to conventional academic protocols. If someone comes to campus who is little more than a provocateur—that is, someone who exploits academic protocols as a mere means to the end of offending students, he believes that at that point it would be useful to experiment with counter-programming. Other members expressed support for this approach. Several members felt that speakers with some views should not be permitted to address an academic community, especially since many of the current crop of provocateurs aim to demean the very students Amherst recruits and cherishes. Professor Sitze stated that he thinks disinviting a speaker can be appropriate as a last resort, and as a very rare exception to the norm of academic freedom. As an example, he noted Williams College President Adam Falk's [Disinvitation of John Derbyshire in February 2016](#). Professor Hansen concurred, stating that he would fully support disinviting a speaker who clearly intended to voice hate speech on Amherst's campus. President Martin commented that the conversation had been informative and thanked the committee. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twenty-third meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in Converse Hall’s Porter Lounge at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, March 27, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” on behalf of a colleague, Professor Moss asked the dean about the schedule for beginning the election for next year’s Committee of Six. The dean said that she expects that the first round of voting will begin this week, after her office concludes the process of review that must be conducted in order to produce the ballot. Professor Moss asked if the Committee of Six would begin making committee assignments soon after the conclusion of the election. Dean Epstein said that this would indeed be the schedule, as is true on an annual basis.

Continuing with questions, Professor Hansen asked the president for a clarification of her comments at the end of the most recent faculty meeting, which he had heard as blaming the faculty for a number of issues, such as low student morale, that the campus is currently facing.

President Martin clarified that she had conveyed the following thoughts. She views the Amherst College faculty as the hardest working faculty that she has ever experienced. Amherst has brought a different student population to campus, and this change has created a need to do some things differently. It is clear to her that the faculty is committed to reaching this new student body. The faculty is also going through a transition. In her opinion, faculty may need to think differently about the inconsistency and potential inequities that tenure-track faculty have brought to our attention that may exist across departments. Tenure-track faculty have also emphasized the lack of clarity about expectations, a waning sense of community experienced by many, and, in, the case of some departments, poor communication and problematic cultures. She was urging greater consistency in the ways in which departments function; emphasizing the importance of cultures that assure equity for tenure-track faculty; and advocating for a stronger sense of college community. Developing a somewhat stronger sense of community would also be a good model for students who are working hard to create a stronger sense of community. There was no blaming of faculty for anything.

The conversation then turned to the discussion at the recent faculty meeting regarding the dean’s proposal to support chairs of academic departments and programs. Professor Call noted that some of the faculty’s comments resonated with him and echoed his own concerns about the proposal to support chairs. He sees constructive ways forward, he said, and feels that the core of his concerns can be assuaged. Reflecting on the culture of his own department, he recognizes and admires the very strong sense of shared commitment to students, a sense that is pervasive across Amherst departments in his experience. He fears that the implementation of the proposal might lead some colleagues to perceive a concentration of responsibility in the chairs of departments and programs, which would be in tension with the dedication to the shared responsibility that all senior colleagues feel, for example in supporting tenure-track colleagues. Continuing, Professor Call said that he can imagine that, in the case of struggling departments in which relationships among members can be strained, chairs would carry an especially heavy burden if they would be expected to communicate to their colleagues what they hear at the envisioned monthly meetings of chairs. Delegating the responsibility to the chair to set everything right seems particularly challenging. While he agrees that mentoring should be

strengthened, in his view, the investment of all senior colleagues is needed to accomplish this goal. Dean Epstein agreed.

Continuing, the dean responded that the intent of the proposal is to support and compensate chairs, not to in any way diminish the shared responsibility of senior colleagues to carry out the work of mentoring and other departmental responsibilities. At the center of the proposal is the goal of increasing communication between the dean and chairs on an ongoing basis and providing chairs with training in best practices. She noted that the conversation that the proposal has generated has already resulted in good ideas of ways to help with the work of chairs. Professor Moss urged the dean to consider bringing a revised version of the proposal to the faculty. She and Professor Call encouraged the dean to include some flexibility to allow chairs, in some instances, to be compensated with more time, through course release or early sabbaticals, rather than only through financial compensation. Professor Call suggested that, if a one-course reduction were offered to department chairs, it should be viewed as a permanent reduction in the teaching strength of the tenure-line faculty equal to approximately eight FTEs across the college. Thus eight new tenure-line faculty would be needed (and should be hired) to maintain the college's teaching staff at its current level, he noted. The dean said that she will consider this and other ideas that have been shared with her and will decide whether to suggest any revisions to the proposal to support chairs.

The members next reviewed a draft charge for the Presidential Task Force on Accessibility and Inclusion and suggested some revisions. The committee agreed to continue the discussion of the charge with some members of the Roosevelt Group, a group of students who are considering issues of accessibility on campus. Members of the group had requested a meeting with the Committee of Six, and the committee had expressed support for having a discussion with the students. At 4:00 P.M. the following students joined the meeting: Annika Ariel '19, Alexis Freeman '19, Joshua Ferrer '18E, Julia Finnerty '20, Mariana Lehoucq '19, Casey McQuillan '18, Olivia Pinney '17, Logan Seymour '19E, and Phillip Yan '18. Jim Brassord, chief of campus operations, and Norm Jones, chief diversity and inclusion officer, were also present.

Dean Epstein welcomed the students, Mr. Brassord, and Mr. Jones on behalf of the committee and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The committee also thanked the students for their work to improve disability and accessibility policies at Amherst and for bringing issues of concern to the attention of the community. The students described their work over the past year, noting that they had interviewed Amherst students, compared Amherst's policies with those of peer institutions, and conducted a survey, to which 10 percent of the student body had responded, to solicit student feedback on Amherst's disability policies and practices. The students noted that, through these mechanisms, they have identified what they consider to be the most pressing concerns of the student body regarding many of the college's disability policies, and have shared their recommendations for improvement. The students' article, titled "[The Invisibility of Disability at Amherst](#)," in *The Amherst Student* described these findings. The students noted that a significant proportion of those who had responded to their survey had expressed dissatisfaction with a range of policies and services and had offered the view that the administration has been unresponsive to concerns that had been raised. The students explained that they have identified five "recurring issues" that they would like to have addressed as soon as possible. They are the following: "administrative responsiveness and

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outreach to students with disabilities; professor-to-student interactions; facility and classroom accessibility; current offerings and capabilities of Amherst disability programs; and the general culture surrounding disability on campus.” They asked that a task force be formed as soon as possible to focus on these areas. Dean Epstein explained that the Committee of Six had reviewed a charge for a task force and said that she expects that the group will be formed soon, with Mr. Brassord and Mr. Jones serving as co-chairs. The students distributed a [“sample charter”](#) for the task force, and the dean said that the committee would take this document into consideration as part of its work to finalize the charge. She informed the students that the group will gather data over the summer and begin meeting regularly in the fall. It is envisioned that the task force will be active for a three- to five-year period.

Continuing the discussion of the charge to the task force, it was agreed that its focus and membership should be as inclusive as possible. There was consensus that faculty, students, and staff should serve. In regard to faculty members, it would be helpful to include Amherst scholar-teachers who have interest in the field of disability studies, issues of access and diversity, the disability rights movement, and/or disability pedagogy. In regard to the number of individuals who should serve on the task force, it was agreed that a group of twelve to fourteen members of the community would be ideal. A larger body would make scheduling difficult and would make work unwieldy. It is expected that the task force will reach out to many campus constituencies, and that participation in the group’s charge will be quite broad, even if the task force itself is smaller than the students had envisioned. Various mechanisms for selecting student-members were discussed, and it was agreed that there should be representation from the group of students who identify themselves as the Roosevelt group, that a call could go out to solicit interest, and that some students could be elected.

It was also agreed that emphasis should be placed on considering issues of disability through the expansive lens of diversity more generally. The entire Amherst community benefits from the presence of individuals with disabilities. The students expressed support for this broad view, while noting that even their more narrow recommendations would have a significant impact, if implemented. The committee reiterated its appreciation for the thoughtfulness and care with which the students have explored these issues and brought recommendations forward, including articulating steps that could be taken to address particular issues sooner rather than later. The students asked that they be kept informed of the progress of the task force’s work, and the dean and president agreed that communication would be a priority. A member of the committee suggested to the dean that it would be helpful to offer faculty a workshop on the model of the “inclusive pedagogy” workshops that would provide information and a space for discussion about accessibility and accommodations in the curriculum and the classroom. It was also suggested that students be informed about accessibility services and accommodations as part of first-year orientation. The students left the meeting at 4:45 P.M., and Mr. Brassord and Mr. Jones left at 5:00 P.M., following a brief discussion of possible revisions to the charge of the task force. The dean agreed to share a revised version of the charge with the Committee of Six and to solicit further feedback from the members. Professor Moss thanked the dean and the president for their responsiveness and for scheduling this meeting so quickly.

The committee next reviewed a revised version (see below) of the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP)’s motion to make changes to the college’s withdrawal [policy](#) (motion four on the

faculty meeting agenda of March 21, 2017). The CEP informed the Committee of Six that it had been brought to the CEP's attention that some wording of the original motion might have led to some inconsistencies (such as the correction to the number of courses required for transfer students to graduate if they withdraw or fail a course) or invited inappropriate attention from students (such as not recognizing that the no-penalty policy only pertains to those experiencing severe academic difficulty). In addition, the CEP felt that it should add the word "normally" in one place to ensure that the policy did not become too restrictive. The CEP would like the corrected motion to appear on the agenda for the next faculty meeting in place of its predecessor, the dean noted. After some discussion of the details, the committee voted six in favor and zero opposed on content and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the revised motion to the faculty.

Motion Two from the Committee of Six

As recommended by the Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), the Committee of Six proposes the following revision, to become effective in the 2017–2018 academic year, to the language of the *Amherst College Catalog* on pages seventy-three to seventy-four of the current catalog, as indicated below in red and blue. The changes in blue represent revisions to the motion on this topic that appeared on the agenda of the faculty meeting of March 21, 2017.

Degree Requirements

BACHELOR OF ARTS

THE DEGREE Bachelor of Arts is conferred upon students who have satisfactorily met the requirements described below. The plan of studies leading to this degree is arranged on the basis of the equivalent of an eight-semester course of study to be pursued by students in residence at Amherst College.

The degree Bachelor of Arts *cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, or *summa cum laude* (Degree with Honors) is awarded to students who have successfully completed an approved program of Honors work with a department or program.

Other students who satisfactorily meet requirements as indicated below receive the degree, Bachelor of Arts, *rite*.

REQUIREMENTS

Each student is responsible for meeting all degree requirements and for ensuring that the Registrar's Office has received all credentials.

The Bachelor of Arts degree is awarded to students who:

1. Complete 32 full semester courses *and* four years (eight semesters) of residence. ~~.*except that a student who has dropped a course without penalty during the first year, or who has failed a course during the first or second year, shall be allowed to graduate provided he or she has been four years in residence at the College and has satisfactorily completed 31 full courses.~~

[new paragraph]

Transfer students must complete 32 full semester courses or their equivalent, at least 16 of them at Amherst, *and* **HAVE BEEN IN** ~~at least two years of~~ residence at Amherst, **FOR AT LEAST TWO YEARS (FOUR SEMESTERS).** ~~except that a transfer student who has dropped a course without penalty during his or her first semester at Amherst shall be allowed to graduate with one less full course.~~

ALL STUDENTS WHO HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM OR FAILED ONE A COURSE DURING ANY SEMESTER EXCEPT THE LAST TWO (FINAL YEAR) SHALL BE ALLOWED TO GRADUATE WITH 31 FULL COURSES OR THEIR EQUIVALENT, PROVIDED THAT THEY HAVE MET THE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT. TRANSFER STUDENTS IN THAT SITUATION MUST ALSO HAVE COMPLETED AT LEAST FIFTEEN FULL COURSES OR THEIR EQUIVALENT AT AMHERST.

~~*In exceptional cases, a student with at least six semesters of residence at Amherst and at least 24 courses, excluding summer school courses not taken as make-up work or recognized as part of a transfer record, may apply for early graduation. Students seeking to graduate before they have satisfied the normal 32-course requirement will have the quality of their achievement thoroughly evaluated. The approval of the student's advisor, department, the Dean of Faculty, the Committee of Six, and finally the Faculty must be received to be granted the status of candidate for the degree.~~

2. Complete the requirements for a major in a department or a group of departments, including a satisfactory performance in the comprehensive evaluation. Standard full courses are equal to four semester credits each. Half courses are equal to two semester credits. Our course system considers all standard full courses to have equal weight toward completing the degree requirements. Courses typically meet for three hours a week, with the expectation that an additional nine hours of academic engagement be spent in class, lab, discussion, studio, film viewing, and/or preparatory work.

3. Attain a general average of 6 in the courses completed at Amherst and a grade of at least C in every course completed at another institution for transfer credit to Amherst.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All students except Independent Scholars are required to elect four full courses each semester and may elect an additional half course. The election of a half course in addition to the normal program is at the discretion of the student and without special permission. A student may not elect more than one half course in any semester except by consent of ~~his or her~~ **THE** class dean

and the departments concerned. In such cases the student's program will be three full courses and two half courses. Half courses are not normally included in the 32-course requirement for graduation.

A student may combine two half courses to be counted as equivalent to a full course if (1) the student completes 4.5 courses in one semester and 3.5 courses in a subsequent semester, and the two halves match in a manner designated by the offering department, and with permission of the academic advisor; or (2) the halves match within the same semester in a manner designated by the offering department, and with permission of the academic advisor and the class dean. No more than four half courses may be so combined for credit toward the degree.

In exceptional cases a student may, with the permission of both ~~his or her~~ **THE STUDENT'S** academic advisor and class dean, take five full courses for credit during a given semester. Such permission is normally granted only to students of demonstrated superior academic ability, responsibility, and will. Fifth courses cannot be used to accelerate graduation. On occasion, a student who has failed a course may be permitted to take a fifth course in a given semester if, in the judgment of the Committee on Academic Standing, this additional work can be undertaken without prejudice to the student's regular program. Students may only retake a course for which they have received a failing grade or from which they have withdrawn in a prior semester.

A student who by failing a course incurs a deficiency in the number of courses required for normal progress toward graduation is usually expected to make up that course deficiency by taking a three- or four-semester hour course at another approved institution during the summer prior to the first semester of the next academic year and no later than the semester prior to the student's last semester at Amherst.

~~A student may not add a course to his/her program after the last day of add/drop at the beginning of each semester or drop a course after this date except as follows:~~ **IN ANY SEMESTER PRIOR TO THE FINAL YEAR, A STUDENT WHO EXPERIENCES SEVERE ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY AND HAS EXHAUSTED ALL ACADEMIC RESOURCES (E.G., MET WITH THE PROFESSOR DURING OFFICE HOURS, RECEIVED TUTORING, MET WITH THE CLASS DEANS, ETC.), MAY BE ALLOWED TO WITHDRAW FROM A COURSE WITHOUT PENALTY AND GRADUATE WITH 31 COURSES. THIS EXCEPTION MAY BE INVOKED ONLY ONCE, AND REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE**

INSTRUCTOR, ADVISOR, AND CLASS DEAN. THE DEADLINE FOR WITHDRAWAL REQUESTS IS THE END OF THE TENTH WEEK OF THE SEMESTER. ~~First-year students who experience severe academic difficulty may petition the Dean of New Students for permission to drop one course without penalty during their first year. The Dean of New Students, in consultation with the instructor and advisor, will decide on the basis of the student's educational needs whether or not to grant the petition. Petitions to withdraw from a course will normally be accepted only during the sixth, seventh, and eighth weeks of either the first or the second semester. Exceptions to this rule~~ **FURTHER EXCEPTIONS** shall be made only for

disabling medical reasons or **FOR** reasons of grave personal emergency, and shall be made ~~only~~ by the **CLASS** Dean ~~of New Students~~.

ALL COURSE DEFICIENCIES MUST NORMALLY BE MADE UP PRIOR TO THE FIRST SEMESTER OF THE FINAL YEAR, EXCEPT THOSE ARISING IN THE FINAL YEAR, IN WHICH CASE THEY MUST BE MADE UP PRIOR TO GRADUATION. ALL MAKE-UP COURSES MUST BE APPROVED IN ADVANCE BY THE REGISTRAR.

~~Transfer students may petition their class dean to drop one course without penalty during the sixth, seventh, and eighth weeks of their first semester at Amherst. They must follow the petition procedure described above. The class dean, in consultation with the student's instructor and advisor, will decide whether or not to grant this petition.~~

~~For sophomores, juniors, and seniors, exceptions to the rule prohibiting the dropping of a course after the ninth calendar day of the semester shall be made only for disabling medical reasons or reasons of grave personal emergency, and shall be made only by the Dean of Student Affairs in consultation with the student's class dean.~~

Courses taken by a student after withdrawing from Amherst College, as part of a graduate or professional program in which that student is enrolled, are not applicable toward an Amherst College undergraduate degree.

The committee reviewed a draft faculty meeting agenda for a possible meeting on April 4 and voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward the agenda to the faculty. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twenty-fourth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in Converse Hall’s Porter Lounge at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, April 3, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with the president offering a brief summary of the meetings of the Board of Trustees, which had been held the prior Friday and Saturday as part of “Instruction Weekend.” President Martin informed the committee that the trustees had been impressed with the presentations given by the dean, members of the faculty, students, and staff, and said that the meetings had gone very well overall.

Dean Epstein informed the committee that Olivia Pinney ’17, a member of the Curriculum Committee, wrote to her to request permission to attend the upcoming faculty meeting. The members asked the dean to convey that Ms. Pinney is welcome to attend.

Conversation turned to the dean’s proposal to support chairs of academic departments and programs. Dean Epstein informed the committee that, after considering the feedback offered by the faculty, she decided to revise the compensation component of the proposal. While these changes will not address concerns that have been raised by some faculty members about the possibility that compensation for serving as chair may weaken faculty governance and change departmental cultures (a view that she does not hold), it is her hope that the flexibility that she has introduced will be helpful. The dean said that, under the revised proposal, chairs would be allowed to choose whether they wish to be compensated with more time—through course release or early sabbaticals—or with an honorarium or additional research funds. During each year in which a faculty member serves as chair, he or she would choose whether to receive an honorarium (\$6,500 during the first two years of chairing and \$7,000 during the third year), which would be taxable; the same amounts as research funds, which would not be taxable; or a course release. Chairs who serve for three years would have the option of choosing an additional semester of leave as compensation at the conclusion of their term. Continuing, Dean Epstein informed the members that she would discuss the specifics of the proposal at the faculty meeting. The committee expressed support and enthusiasm for these changes and voted unanimously to endorse the revised version of the proposal and to share it with the faculty. The members offered thanks to the dean for the time and care that she has devoted to this proposal and for her willingness to listen to the concerns of the faculty.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Hansen asked about the status of the proposal to change the meeting time for faculty meetings. The dean informed the members that plans are in place for the Committee of Six to meet with the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Faculty Meeting Hours this coming Monday. Professor Hansen next asked Dean Epstein if she has considered further the matter of reimbursing faculty for childcare costs incurred in order to attend evening faculty meetings. The dean said that there are a number of complexities involved in providing such reimbursements. Professor Hansen suggested that the dean look into the practices of peer institutions to see if there are workable approaches. Dean Epstein agreed to do so, while commenting that such reimbursements would not be necessary if faculty meetings are held during the day. Concluding his questions, Professor Hansen asked if the college plans to create a testing center to serve the needs of students who have been granted accommodations and to aid faculty in meeting students’ needs. Dean Epstein said that the college has made a commitment to provide assistance to professors needing to schedule exams for students with accommodations. That assistance will be in place for the fall semester.

Continuing with questions, Professor Call noted that, prompted perhaps by the committee's meeting of the previous week with students to discuss issues of access and inclusion, a student had brought to his attention a couple of concerns about the space to be allocated for quiet dorms in this year's room draw. The student has learned from the Office of Residential Life that the number of students interested in "quiet housing" is more than double the number of spaces of this kind that have been allocated as part of the upcoming room draw. The student also raised concern about the choice of which spaces to allocate as quiet halls. The example that the student gave was the choice of Weiland over King as a "quiet dorm," since the student feels that King would be much quieter, due to the location of the common rooms in the two dorms. Professor Call said that he consulted with Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, who informed him that that, when her office asked students about their desire for quiet halls, the feedback was "impressive." The college has responded by initiating a pilot; five residence halls across campus have been designated as quiet halls, representing a total of two hundred ten beds. There were about four hundred students who indicated some level of interest in access to quiet housing in future years, Ms. Coffey reported, Professor Call noted. She also explained that the reason that Weiland has been selected over King is that King has a theme floor located within the hall (the French floor). Professor Call expressed the hope that, if more students seek "quiet housing" going forward, it will be possible to accommodate their requests.

Dean Epstein next informed the members that the charge to the Presidential Task Force on Accessibility and Inclusion is being finalized by the president, co-chairs Jim Brassord and Norm Jones, and herself. She noted that the feedback received from the Committee of Six and the students who had met with the committee last Monday has been helpful. The dean said that she will share the final charge with the committee.

Discussion turned to two nominations for the John J. McCloy '16 Professorship of American Institutions and International Diplomacy, which is a distinguished visiting appointment. After some conversation about the criteria for selection, the members agreed that the dean should move forward with making offers to the two nominees, one of whom was nominated by an individual faculty member, while the other was brought forward by two departments.

At 4:15 P.M., the committee was joined by the members of the College Council (Karen Blake '17; Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer; Professor Andrew Dole; Joshua Ferrer '18E; Dean Gendron, senior associate dean of students; Paul Gramieri '17; Professor Rafeeq Hasan; Lauren Knight '20; Sophie Murguia '17; Alex Vasquez, dean of students; and Professor Amy Wagaman [chair]), as well as Professor Nicola Courtright, last year's chair of the council, and Rick López, dean of new students. Conversation focused on the College Council's proposals to revise its own charge and to revise the honor code. Most of the time allotted was spent on a detailed review of the honor code proposal, with differing views offered about language that the College Council had brought forward.

Professor Wagaman began the discussion by commenting that the process of reviewing the honor code; organizing opportunities for feedback from students, faculty, and staff; and bringing recommendations forward has proven to be lengthy and complex. She noted that the code has not been changed in twelve years. Continuing, she commented that, in 2008, the College Council had reviewed the code and had made a recommendation to renew it without modification. This recommendation was approved by both students and faculty. Professor Wagaman commented that the College Council recommends that the honor code be reconsidered with regularity to keep it up to date. She noted that the council had not been

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apprised that it would be necessary for the Committee of Six to consider the College Council's proposal before it went before the student body, a step that has added even more time to the process. The Committee of Six noted the value of having an opportunity for preliminary vetting and feedback, in addition to the general feedback already solicited from the campus community by the College Council, and suggested that a review by the Committee of Six be built into the process of reviewing the code. Professor Wagaman responded that the council appreciates having this clarification and proposed that future chairs of the College Council be informed that a review by the Committee of Six, before proposals are forwarded to the student body and faculty for vote, is part of the process. She suggested that, realistically, the expectation should be that reviewing the honor code and making recommendations is a two-year process, which has implications for the council's charge. Professor Wagaman noted the tension between trying to update the honor code and trying to develop "the perfect honor code," which is an idealistic goal in her view. In the course of the discussion, it was noted that there is a need to define some of the terms in the honor code, and the president stressed the need for consistency among the college's policies that govern rights, behavior, and other topics.

Conversation turned to the Committee of Six's question about the mechanisms for ensuring that students read and understand the honor code. In advance of the meeting, the Committee of Six had communicated to the College Council its view that the college be proactive in regard to introducing students to the code, given the implications of violating it. The College Council has similar concerns and had already written to Dean López after noticing that, in recent years there has been no large event surrounding the signing of the honor code. Currently, incoming students read and sign the honor code when they confirm their intent to matriculate.

Programming during orientation has focused on making certain that students understand the content of the honor code. Some of this communication occurs during squad meetings, and other transmission of information takes place during programs developed by Amanda Vann, associate director of health education/sexual respect educator, and during "SHE Skits." In addition, prior to their arrival, students were required to watch videos covering related topics, including Title IX. Assessment by the Office of Institutional Research reveals that this year Amherst's programs were extremely effective at assuring that students have a strong understanding of the honor code and how to apply it. However, the absence of a large honor code-signing event perhaps has resulted in the absence of a sense of collective mutual obligation around the honor code, Dean López explained. The College Council has recommended the re-introduction of a dedicated honor-code signing ceremony in next year's Amherst College orientation. Dean López noted that, as part of required orientation activities up until the most recent orientation, students attended an honor code-signing ceremony. During the ceremony, the code was discussed and signed—one section at a time. While this ceremony was absent from the most recent orientation, Dean López noted that plans are now in place to have a signing ceremony during orientation that will enhance communication to students about their rights and responsibilities, as outlined in the honor code, and convey to them that their behavior and conduct are subject to consequences stated therein.

A discussion about details of the honor code proposal followed. The student-members of the council stressed the desire of the student body to engage in the process of reviewing the honor code and, as a general matter, to have input into areas of college governance that affect them. In some cases, they argued that changes that the council had recommended codified rights that they currently have, but which are not articulated in the honor code at present. Members of the

Committee of Six noted that the honor code should not be used as a vehicle for expanding students' rights in regard to institutional governance. One member commented that the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), while noting the value of students' participation in the governance of the institutions that they attend, also presents clear guidelines for the limits of that participation. The member commented that, in its [*Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities*](#), the AAUP points out the "obstacles to students' participation," among them that students have "transitory status," meaning that "present action does not carry with it subsequent responsibility, and the inescapable fact that the other components of the institution are in a position of judgment over the students."

A good deal of time was spent on the question of the standards for freedom of speech in an academic space, and the Committee of Six emphasized that the faculty is responsible for deciding what constitutes academic freedom and the parameters of freedom of expression at the college. The members noted that, when it comes to freedom of expression on campus—both inside and outside the classroom—it is important under current conditions to preserve the tenets of evidence-based arguments and the pursuit of truth. A topic of concern was the College Council's recommendation to remove "reasoned discourse" from the honor code, due to concerns that this language could be used to stifle protests and other legitimate forms of oppositional expression. The committee recommended retaining the language about "reasoned discourse" in the honor code.

In the time remaining, the two committees had a brief discussion about the College Council's proposal to revise its charge. Conversation focused largely on the selection process for student-members and the make-up of the council. Members of the Committee of Six said that they continue to have reservations about the proposed structure and the proposed mechanism for selecting student-members of the council, which would rely on appointment by the Association of Amherst Students (AAS), rather than student-wide elections for at least some members. The Committee of Six suggested that student-wide elections would likely enhance the diversity of the College Council by expanding access for the student body to service on the council. Student-members of the College Council argued that the opposite is true and noted that other faculty committees also do not have student-wide elections. They explained that the AAS solicits applications for membership in faculty committees, that the names of the applicants are removed, and that the appointments board (a group of six senators) deliberates and makes a recommendation to the full senate. The senate then votes. The student-members stressed that student-wide elections may devolve into popularity contests, and said that, there is low voter turnout, while the number of students who submit applications to serve on committees is high and reflects their interests. Under the application process, there is anonymity, which many students value. The process also enables students who don't wish to serve as senators to participate and furthers the goal of diversity, the students argued.

In response to the clarification offered by the student-members, some Committee of Six members said that they found these arguments to be compelling and felt that their concerns had been assuaged. Other members continued to have reservations about funneling all appointments through the AAS, given past problems with that body in regard to lack of diversity and intolerance, and other issues. One member of the Committee of Six suggested that a process in which students submit anonymous applications for membership directly to the College Council (and other faculty committees) might be another avenue. This approach would necessitate that

faculty committees revise their charges. The student-members did not favor this approach, repeating their earlier claim that the AAS has a direct line to the student body.

Turning to the topic of the make-up of the College Council, the Committee of Six conveyed its concerns about the balance of faculty members in relation to the number of student members under the proposal. There would be six student members (five with vote), three members from the administration (two with vote), and three voting faculty members. The council argued that there were six student-members in the original (1966) charge to the council, and student-members felt that the number of voting members from the student body should equal the combined number from the faculty and administration because students should have more of a voice on a committee that is devoted to student life.

A member of the Committee of Six noted that the College Council is a faculty committee with student membership, and student-members represent a minority on all other faculty committees. Professor Courtright, former chair of the College Council, expressed support for having more students' views represented, noting that, in her experience, student-members have given reasoned opinions, took discussion in new directions that the council should have been considering, and contributed in productive ways to the formulation of policy. Since College Council proposals come to the Committee of Six before being forwarded to the faculty, she feels that there are many safeguards in place to ensure faculty oversight, even if another student member is added to the College Council. Beyond the balance of the constituencies, the Committee of Six expressed concern that the size of the College Council would be quite large, under the proposal.

The meeting with the College Council concluded with a discussion of President Martin's suggestion that the council consider recasting the charge—placing an emphasis on the role of the council as less regulatory and more positive. Members of the College Council expressed support for adding language, as the president had proposed, about the council's role in developing and bringing forward ideas about enhancing residential life at the college. The council continues to view its role as regulatory in nature, as well, its members said.

The Committee of Six expressed its appreciation to the College Council for its hard work on its charge and on the honor code. The members of the College Council thanked the Committee of Six, the president, and the dean and then left the meeting. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twenty-fifth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, April 10, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with a discussion of personnel matters. At 3:30 P.M., the Committee of Six was joined by members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Faculty Meeting Hours, which is being chaired by Professor Alexander George. Other members in attendance were Jesse Barba, director of institutional research; Kathleen Kilventon, registrar; and Professor Josef Trapani. The dean thanked the ad hoc committee for meeting with the Committee of Six. By way of background, Professor George reminded the members that in the spring of 2016, the Committee of Six had charged the ad hoc committee with exploring the feasibility of creating a weekly two-hour block during the day that could be set aside for faculty meetings and community scheduling. At that time, it had been agreed that, in general, to reduce class bunching, making fuller use of the timeslots that are available for classes would be helpful. It had also been noted that finding a time to hold faculty meetings during the day, which some faculty have said they would prefer, would also create space for a community period, since the slot would go unused when faculty meetings are not held. It had been recognized that changing the time of faculty meetings to the day would result in the need to find/create a two-hour block, which would not be a simple matter. The full charge to the ad hoc committee appears below.

Charge to the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Faculty Meeting Hours

The Committee of Six requests that the Ad Hoc Committee on Alternative Faculty Meeting Hours examine the feasibility of creating a weekly two-hour block during the day that would be set aside for faculty meetings and community scheduling—for example, campus-wide meetings and talks by speakers of interest. In developing its recommendations, the committee is asked to consult broadly with those who have the right and responsibility to attend faculty meetings; to gather information about community scheduling (aka “community hours”) at peer institutions; to study Amherst’s weekly class schedule and to propose changes, if needed; and to consider the implications for athletics, the arts, and classroom availability of all proposed time slots. The ad hoc committee is asked to submit its findings and recommendations in a report to the Committee of Six in the fall of 2016.

Continuing, Professor George noted that, after hosting open meetings for faculty and staff and meeting with the Association of Amherst Students (AAS) in the fall of 2016, the ad hoc committee developed four proposals. This fall, the ad hoc committee had also met with the current Committee of Six (with the exception of Professor Frank, who was not a member of the committee in fall 2016). Following the recommendation that the Committee of Six had made at

the meeting, the ad hoc committee spent the remainder of last fall focusing on the development of a proposal for a single two-hour block during the day, other than on Friday afternoon, that could be reserved for faculty meetings, a community period, and departmental matters. Also following the Committee of Six's recommendation, the ad hoc committee has now created a proposal that describes changes that would be necessary in the teaching schedule to reserve the slot. Professor George explained that the ad hoc committee is recommending that the college form a separate committee to address programming, if the faculty approves the proposal to create a community period. The Committee of Six thanked the ad hoc committee for following the advice to create a single proposal.

The members of the Committee of Six and the ad hoc committee spent the remainder of their time together discussing the ad hoc committee's proposal that faculty meetings and community periods take place on Thursdays from 1:00 P.M. to 2:50 P.M. Under the proposal, a new block of course times would be created on Tuesday/Friday afternoon (an underutilized portion of Amherst's academic schedule). The ad hoc committee shared proposed changes to the course schedule in detail, and the strengths and challenges of the proposal were discussed. It was stressed that, for the proposal to be implemented, if it is approved, a number of faculty/departments would need to be willing to teach in the newly created Tuesday/Friday afternoon time slot. The ad hoc committee also shared information about the underutilization of current time slots, which are not limited to Fridays. Some members suggested some possible alternative times to the proposed Thursday block; the ad hoc committee said that these alternatives were considered during deliberations and were dismissed for a variety of reasons. Professor George commented that, while no proposal would come without challenges, the ad hoc committee's significant period of information-gathering, analysis, and deliberation has yielded a proposal that seems best, given the many constraints and goals.

The conversation continued. In response to questions about whether it is possible to predict how many faculty/departments would be willing to switch to an alternative teaching time, the ad hoc committee commented that the number is very difficult to predict. It is clear that it would be problematic if many faculty/departments switched to a Monday/Wednesday schedule, because of bunching that would occur. More faculty would need to teach on a Tuesday/Friday afternoon schedule for the proposal to be implemented successfully, if the faculty vote to approve it. The registrar noted that the practice of teaching classes two days a week has grown more popular at the college in recent years. The question was raised about whether an enforcement mechanism for ensuring that a certain number of faculty members/departments switch to different teaching time is being proposed. Professor George commented that the ad hoc committee's proposal relies on volunteerism and good faith to succeed. At present, departments are asked to use all available time slots before using any slot twice. The registrar commented that many departments do not take this approach, which is not required. The dean said that she would prefer to continue to have a voluntary approach that depends on good faith to ensure that some faculty/departments redistribute their courses, in order to implement the proposal, if the faculty vote to approve it. Mr. Barba commented that three-quarters of the courses that are now taught on a Tuesday/Thursday afternoon schedule must be accommodated on Friday afternoon. The remaining courses would need to be accommodated in another slot to

make it possible to implement the proposal, if it is approved. The ad hoc committee commented that the expectation should be that an agreement to shift a teaching time should not fall only on those who now teach on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Another issue to consider will be whether there would be a sufficient number of classrooms available to match the curriculum, once shifts had occurred. A member of the Committee of Six raised the question of alternative slots that might be available for classes that are currently taught one day a week for two-and-a-half hours on Thursday between on 1:00 P.M. and 4:00 P.M. Under the proposal, such courses could shift to Tuesday afternoon or Friday afternoon, starting at 3:00 P.M., the ad hoc committee noted. Shifting to a morning time would interfere with other classes. Ms. Kilventon said that she has more concern about the proposal's impact on classes taught on a two-day-a-week schedule.

Continuing the discussion, all agreed that it must be made clear to faculty that, if they want to vote in favor of the proposal, many must also be willing to shift some teaching times to utilize the Friday afternoon slots. Professor Trapani noted that, as an experiment, he is teaching a course on Friday afternoons (between 2:30 P.M. and 4:30 P.M.) now and plans to teach in a Friday slot again this coming fall. He has not experienced any significant enrollment problems or complaints from students, he noted, and members of the Committee of Six noted the advantage of having a two-day gap between class sessions.

The Committee of Six asked if the ad hoc committee had considered a more drastic revision of the schedule. Professor George noted that the need to keep Amherst's schedule in sync with that of the other Five-College institutions, the desire not to extend the day because of the schedule for athletics and the arts, and the fact that Amherst courses are not taught in the evening make it clear that a proposal for a drastic overhaul of the schedule would be challenging to develop. All agreed that the proposal presented by the ad hoc committee should come before the faculty. Noting that changes would have to be made to create the new block, the two committees concurred that it will be important to have a discussion with the faculty to learn what the level of interest is in the community period and having faculty meetings during the day. Offering a rationale for a community period and noting the benefits that a period would bring should be part of the discussion. One way of implementing the proposal would be that, for any given month, there might be one faculty meeting, perhaps a couple of community events, and opportunities for departments to have meetings and/or to organize lectures or symposia, for example. The culture of faculty meetings would change, as they would be held on a monthly basis and would be one hour and fifty minutes in length instead of the current two hours. Professor Frank, not having been on the Committee of Six during the initial discussions, wondered on whose behalf this proposal is going to be forwarded to the faculty. Some discussion suggested that the proposal had come from multiple campus entities. She agreed that, having chaired the Enhancement of Student Intellectual Life Strategic Planning Committee that originally advocated for a community period several years ago, she would make remarks at the faculty meeting concerning what could be gained if the new schedule were to be adopted and a period created.

The two committees discussed next steps. It was agreed to have an hour-long committee-of-the-whole discussion about the proposal at a faculty meeting to be held on May 2. There would not be a vote on the proposal at this meeting. At the meeting, Professor Frank will speak

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about the community period, and then the ad hoc committee will present its proposal as a three-year pilot and discuss the nuts and bolts. Afterward, there will be time for conversation and questions. Following the May 2 meeting, over the summer and fall, departments will be asked to consider the proposal and its feasibility at the departmental and individual level. In the early fall, the dean will organize a meeting of chairs of academic departments and programs, and the topic of the proposal will be on the agenda. Finally, in the fall, the proposal will be brought to the faculty for a vote. Since the development of the teaching schedule for the 2018–2019 year must begin in December and January, the schedule for the process, as described, must be followed in order to make it possible to implement the proposal in 2018–2019, if desired. Professor Call, while offering support for investigating options, stressed the need to consider the scheduling requirements of departments that teach classes four or more days a week—the Department of Mathematics and Statistics for example. Faculty in language departments would also have to think carefully about the proposal, it was noted. The committee thanked the members of the ad hoc committee for all of their hard work on this issue. They left the meeting at 4:18 P.M.

The committee reviewed a draft of the charge to the Presidential Task Force on Accessibility and Inclusion and discussed members of the faculty who might serve on the task force. Professor Frank reminded the dean and president that the student group that advocated for this task force stressed the importance of representation on the task force of individuals with disabilities or who had personal experience with disability.

The committee turned to a review of the drafts of the letters that are sent each year to candidates and chairs regarding procedures for promotion to full professor and approved the documents. Conversation then turned to a revised proposal, forwarded by the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), for a policy regarding teaching by instructional staff whose primary responsibilities do not involve teaching within the curriculum. The members discussed the practice of long standing that staff in this category are not paid when they teach. The dean noted that staff who have been hired to fulfill responsibilities that do not include teaching should, for the most part, be focusing on those duties. If a qualified staff member in this category does teach on occasion, the individual, with permission of his or her supervisor, may choose to use some time in the day for teaching. Professor Frank expressed support for compensating staff members who teach. Professor Hansen argued for flexibility in regard to permitting staff members in this category to teach. Professor Moss wondered how such a policy might be perceived and received by some members of the staff, and asked why such a policy should be enacted now, when staff morale appears to be low. She is also unclear about what problem such a policy was designed to solve. The dean said that it is her understanding that the CEP and the staff wish to have clarity about this issue. The committee suggested some revisions to the CEP's statement of the policy and asked the dean to convey these changes to that committee. She agreed to do so.

The committee next discussed briefly the meetings that the faculty members of the Committee of Six had with tenure-track faculty on February 13 and February 15 of this year. Professor Hansen had shared minutes of those meetings with the president, the dean, and the committee prior to the Committee of Six's meeting. The president and the dean said that they would be meeting with the tenure-track faculty soon. The dean asked the members if they would identify the most pressing issues raised at the meetings, anticipating that she and the president

could speak to them. Professor Hansen suggested that the following topics, among many others, might qualify: enhancing consistency across departments in regard to mentoring practices and the development, format, and administration of teaching evaluations; retention of tenure-track faculty at the college; expectations regarding committee service for tenure-track faculty; assistance that the college plans to provide to professors who need to schedule exams for students with accommodations; and demystifying faculty personnel processes and enhancing transparency surrounding standards for reappointment and tenure. Some members commented that the administration is already working to address some issues that tenure-track faculty members have brought forward—for example, the creation and implementation of a standard teaching evaluation form.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twenty-sixth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, April 17, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with Dean Epstein noting that, while the decision was made last year to change to a schedule of thirteen weeks of regularly scheduled classes and three make-up days in the spring semester, Senior Assembly was still scheduled to be held on the last day of scheduled classes (April 28) this year. The dean said that the result is that the event is being held earlier than ever before. In the dean’s view, the current timing is too early, largely because the due dates of senior theses are linked to the date of Senior Assembly; all honors theses are due in advance of Senior Assembly so that prizes can be determined, etc., she noted. Dean Epstein proposed moving Senior Assembly closer to its traditional time—the first week of May. She explained that doing so would give students five additional days to work on their theses. In practice, she noted, this change would provide an extra week for students to devote to this important capstone experience. The dean proposed that Senior Assembly be held either on the Wednesday at the end of the make-up period, or even the Friday of reading period. She informed the members that she had checked with the Kathleen Kilventon, the registrar, and Pat Allen, director of conferences and special events, who had said that this change would not present difficulties in their areas. The members expressed support for the dean’s proposal, but suggested that the dean reach out to Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, and Don Faulstick, director of athletics, to ask for their views about the potential change. In particular, they asked the dean to inquire of Ms. Coffey whether seniors might leave campus if there are no make-up days and students have a week of reading period. The committee suggested that Mr. Faulstick weigh in on whether play-offs might be taking place during the first week of May, which could be problematic. The dean agreed to do so.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Moss asked about the process that will be used to select the faculty and student members of the Presidential Task Force on Accessibility and Inclusion. She expressed the view that the task force should include some members who have specific expertise or perspective on the issues facing disabled members of the campus community. Other members agreed. Dean Epstein noted that President Martin will select the faculty appointees to the task force, in consultation with the Committee of Six. The president will select the student appointees, in consultation with members of the Roosevelt Group, a group of students who are considering issues of accessibility on campus, and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

The committee next reviewed nominees for two named professorships. While expressing support for the nominees, some members raised questions, more generally, about the process that should be used to select nominees for professorships, such as those under consideration, that provide salary supplements and/or funding for research. Professor Hansen suggested that perhaps the faculty should be asked to propose nominees. The president and the dean said that they would consider this issue and the committee’s advice.

Conversation turned to a revised version of the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP)’s proposed policy on courses taught by instructional staff. The dean noted that the CEP had raised

concern about some of the language that the Committee of Six had suggested. The members agreed to remove that content. The committee then voted five in favor, with one abstention, to approve the policy, which will be appended to the CEP's minutes. The members next discussed the format of the agenda for a possible May 2 faculty meeting. It was agreed that the meeting should be held, and that the members would review a full draft agenda at their next meeting.

The committee reviewed drafts of the dean's letters to candidates and department chairs about reappointment and offered some revisions. In the course of the discussion, some members raised concern about a procedure referenced in the *Faculty Handbook* ([Faculty Handbook at III., D., 4.](#)) regarding the candidate's letter and agreed that it would be helpful to make a change. According to the current language, by December 1, candidates for reappointment are required to submit a letter to their department/s describing their teaching experience at the college, the present state of their scholarship or creative work and their aims and plans for the future, and their engagement in college life. The language specifies that the department letter, *or* a modified version of it that addresses non-specialist readers, is included in the reappointment dossier and forwarded to the Committee of Six. The members agreed that, if two letters are written, it is important that both of them are shared with the department/s and with the Committee of Six. The members decided to bring a motion to the faculty to revise the current *Faculty Handbook* language to implement this change. The members then discussed committee assignments. It was agreed that the committee would return to this topic at its next meeting.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of bias reporting. In anticipation of the conversation, President Martin had asked that the committee be provided with links (<https://freeexpression.uchicago.edu/page/related-policies-and-reports> and <https://csl.uchicago.edu/get-help/bias-response-team>) to information about the University of Chicago's bias reporting system. The president commented that she worries about the implications of adopting and implementing such a system at Amherst, particularly because of the potential threat that academic freedom could be abridged. She noted that some students have been advocating that the college adopt a system and said that she is also aware that many colleges and universities have done so. The president stressed that, while she has concerns, she is open to more discussion on campus. President Martin said that, while she is not advocating that Amherst adopt the University of Chicago's system or any system at all, she said that she favors an approach in which policies regarding bias-reporting are embedded within a commitment to protect freedom of expression and academic freedom. The University of Chicago takes such an approach. She noted that, while the system's bias response team is charged with supporting and guiding students who want assistance in deciding how to handle alleged bias incidents and in documenting such incidents, the team is not involved in disciplinary actions. The university notes that not all bias incidents meet the criteria for violations of university policy. It also seems desirable that a committee, rather than an individual or office, reviews reports of bias under the Chicago system, she noted.

Most members of the Committee of Six commented that they dislike the idea of making use of a computerized system of reporting and data-gathering and would prefer an educational approach to a punitive one, whenever possible. A goal, most argued, should be to find ways to connect members of the community from different backgrounds, to encourage engagement

across difference, to overcome preconceived ideas, and to resolve issues through mediation or restorative justice whenever possible. An approach that helps students learn how to better speak with one another would be preferable, most members agreed, to one that allows or even encourages students to anonymously turn each other in.” Most members of the committee felt that adopting such a bias-reporting system may have results that could be unfortunate, including limiting the capacity of members of the community to protest, and impinging on protected speech. Professor Hansen expressed the view that it is important for the college to do more than to merely acknowledge that comments that demonstrate a lack of respect have been made, even if the comments fall under protected speech. Professor Sitze stated that he thinks that the intentions behind this system are good, but he also noted that, at other campuses, such systems, once in place, have ended up operating in highly counterintuitive and unintended ways. A system of this sort, he believes, is only as good as its worst uses, and these systems already have been used to anonymously report professors and student activists who voice controversial criticisms of various social injustices. If we are comfortable with uses of this kind, he argued, then we should favor a system of this sort. If not, he continued, then perhaps we should resist the temptation to seek technological solutions for social and political problems. Above all, he suggested, we should not underestimate the difficulty of coming up with a coherent definition of “bias.” Professor Moss commented that Norm Jones, chief diversity and inclusion officer, is playing a key role in providing training about bias. Following up on this, Professor Frank suggested that the committee discuss bias reporting with Norm Jones and others who have expertise in thinking about it, something she feels she does not have. The members agreed that they would find it helpful to hear his views on this subject.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twenty-seventh meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, April 24, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with a discussion of personnel matters. The dean then informed the members that tenure-track faculty, via their consultative group, have requested that votes on major motions at faculty meetings always be done with paper ballots, eliminating the need to request paper ballots under particular circumstances. The committee expressed support for this approach, and it was agreed that paper ballots will be used for voting at future faculty meetings. Continuing, Dean Epstein noted that, as the committee had requested, she had consulted with Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, and Don Faulstick, director of athletics, on the question of holding Senior Assembly on the evening of the last day of the make-up period—that is, the Wednesday evening before reading period starts. Ms. Coffey and Mr. Faulstick informed the dean that they see no problems with scheduling Senior Assembly at this time in the future. The members agreed to the schedule, as proposed.

Conversation turned to the draft charge to the Presidential Task Force on Accessibility and Inclusion, which, the dean explained, had been refined further since the Committee of Six had last reviewed the document. The members suggested that some revisions be considered, and the dean agreed to convey the proposed changes to the co-chairs of the task force—Norm Jones, chief diversity and inclusion officer, and Jim Brassord, chief of campus operations.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Hansen asked, on behalf of a colleague, whether the college is no longer providing funding for Amherst students who participate in the Big Brothers Big Sisters Program to allow their “little brothers” and “little sisters” to have lunch on occasion at Valentine. Professor Hansen said that it is the colleague’s understanding that Amherst students could, in the past, simply “swipe” the children in at the dining hall, and that the college would cover the charge. Dean Epstein said that she will learn more about this issue and report back to the committee.

Continuing with “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Hansen said that he has heard that there are plans to expand the college’s Summer Science Program and Summer Humanities Program. He asked the dean if such plans are in place and, if so, if there has been consultation with participating departments. He commented on the need to learn the views of those “on the ground,” noting that expanding the programs could have curricular and staffing ramifications. The dean said that she indeed would like to expand these programs to serve more students and commented that consultation with departments should take place. She said that she would ask her associate deans about consultation that may have already taken place, and she said that she would ensure that more outreach occurs. Professor Hansen next asked if the dean is developing a program to train Amherst students to assess classes, in consultation with Hari Kumar, director of instructional and curricular design services. The dean said that she had learned of a successful program of this kind at Bryn Mawr and had been intrigued. While she had considered initiating a similar program at Amherst, she had ultimately decided not to pursue this idea. Finally, Professor Hansen asked that the topic of “managing enrollments” be placed on

the agenda of the committee's next meeting. The dean agreed to include this item, noting that the May 1 meeting would be the committee's last for this academic year.

The committee next discussed a [proposal from the Department of Classics](#) to create a new major in classical civilization within the department and a [letter of endorsement from the Committee on Educational Policy \(CEP\)](#). Professor Moss asked about the use of tracks and the willingness of the CEP to endorse this model. Several members noted that Amherst has for some time had multiple majors within a single department. They concurred that this model, with which the current proposal is consistent, does not seem problematic in any way and is in keeping with a structure of longstanding at the college. Professor Moss asked if the specific major within the Department of Classics would be noted on a students' transcripts or whether all those majoring within the department would be designated as classics majors on their transcripts. Dean Epstein said that it is her understanding that the specific major within the department would be noted on students' transcripts. Professor Call asked if those satisfying all the requirements for multiple majors within the department would graduate with multiple majors, and could theoretically "quadruple major," since the classics department would, under the proposal, offer four different majors (Latin, Greek, classics, and classical civilization). The dean said that, while theoretically possible, it would be challenging to do so. In realistic terms, satisfying the requirements for multiple majors in the department could happen only with "double counting" of single courses within the department (i.e., "counting" one's Greek course for both the Greek major and the classical civilization major). However, like most departments, the Department of Classics does not allow "double counting" for double majors in other departments (for example, "counting" Ancient Philosophy for both a classics and a philosophy major), and would certainly not within the majors of its own department, she has been told.

Professor Hansen asked if a student who arrives at Amherst having never taken a classical language could complete the requirements for the classical civilization major, as proposed. The dean said that this would be possible. Professor Hansen noted that the proposal mentions that three of four members of the department are in favor of creating the new major. He asked the dean about the source of one department member's concern. The dean said that one department member feels that more than four language courses should be required. Dean Epstein noted that the other members of the department do not share this view and commented that it is common for liberal arts colleges to have a major such as the one being proposed. The committee discussed whether having a greater focus on culture, rather than language, in any way diminishes the rigor of the major. It was agreed that the arguments for establishing the major that are articulated in the proposal are compelling, and the members expressed support for the proposal. Professor Hansen commented that a recent external review of the department also had recommended the establishment of a major of this kind. The committee then voted six in favor and zero opposed on the substance of the following motion and six in favor and zero opposed to forward it to the faculty:

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and the Committee of Six recommend that the faculty approve the following motion:

That the Department of Classics be authorized to establish a major in classical civilization.

The members then reviewed a draft faculty meeting agenda for a meeting on May 2 and voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward it to the faculty. Discussion then returned to nominations for faculty committees. Professor Hansen asked the dean if all tenure-track faculty members are invited to serve on a committee by the time that they reach the third year of their appointment at Amherst. The dean said that this is the aspiration and is normally the case.

Discussion turned to a draft motion about a procedure referenced in the *Faculty Handbook* ([Faculty Handbook at III., D., 4.](#)) regarding the candidate's letter on her or his own behalf. At their last meeting (see the Committee of Six minutes of April 17, 2017), the members had agreed that it would be helpful to make a change to this procedure. The committee voted on the following reappointment motion to effect the change described in the motion:

Motion (to inform Committee of Six deliberations) To revise the [Faculty Handbook at III., D., 4.](#), Reappointment Procedures, paragraph 4 (to become effective in the academic year 2017–2018), as indicated in bold caps.

By December 1, candidates for reappointment will submit a letter to their department/s describing their teaching experience at the college, the present state of their scholarship or creative work and their aims and plans for the future, and their engagement in college life. ~~That letter, or a modified version addressing non-specialist readers, will be included in the reappointment dossier and forwarded to the Committee of Six.~~ **RECOGNIZING THAT COMMITTEE OF SIX MEMBERS ARE USUALLY NOT EXPERTS IN CANDIDATES' FIELDS, CANDIDATES FOR REAPPOINTMENT MAY CHOOSE TO WRITE A MODIFIED VERSION OF THIS LETTER FOR THE COMMITTEE OF SIX, IN WHICH THEY DESCRIBE THEIR WORK AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN A LESS SPECIALIZED IDIOM. IF TWO LETTERS ARE WRITTEN, BOTH ARE SHARED WITH THE DEPARTMENT. BOTH LETTERS ARE ALSO** included in the reappointment dossier and forwarded to the Committee of Six. The letter/s will serve as the basis for a conversation between the candidate and tenured members of the department/s before the department meets to finalize the reappointment recommendation. The letter /S ~~itself~~ will not become part of the tenure dossier (voted by faculty, February 2005; amended May 2012).

The vote was six in favor and zero opposed on substance and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the motion to the faculty. The committee decided that the motion should be placed on the agenda of the faculty meeting of May 18. The members also agreed that consideration should be given to requiring that all letters written by candidates for tenure also be shared with the department and the Committee of Six. At present, candidates for tenure have the

option of sharing the letter on their own behalf with their department or sending it directly, in confidence, to the Committee of Six. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty

The twenty-eighth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2016–2017 was called to order by President Martin in the president’s office at 3:15 P.M. on Monday, May 1, 2017. Present, in addition to the president, were Professors Call, Frank, Hansen, Moss, Sitze, and Van Compernelle; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The dean began the meeting by informing the committee that she had received a request from the Association of Amherst Students (AAS) that a representative of that body be permitted to attend the upcoming faculty meeting to announce the recipient of the AAS distinguished teaching award (the dean later learned that the recipient would be Assistant Professor Dwaipayan Sen). The committee agreed that the student is welcome to attend. The committee turned briefly to a personnel matter.

Following up on Professor Hansen’s inquiries at the committee’s last meeting, Dean Epstein reported on consultation that has taken place about expanding the college’s summer science program and plans for further conversation. Dean Epstein explained that, at her request, in December, Professor Honig, director of the Moss Quantitative Center, had reached out to almost all colleagues who teach in the summer science program and had asked their opinions about the idea of serving a greater number of students. In March, Associate Dean Sarat had met with Professor Honig and the members of the Faculty Advisory Committee to the Moss Quantitative Center (which includes representatives from all STEM departments) and had made the group aware of the possibility that the summer science program might be expanded, depending on the budget. At the dean’s request, Associate Dean Sarat reached out recently to those who teach in the summer science program to schedule a meeting to discuss the expansion of the program. Professor Call noted the importance of learning the views of those who are centrally involved in the program, while commenting that it appears that much of the conversation about expanding the program had previously occurred without the benefit of such consultation. Dean Epstein explained that the proposal is to expand the program by raising the number of students in individual summer science courses from thirteen to eighteen students. The dean agreed that having additional feedback about the expansion from the faculty who teach in the program will be very helpful, and she said that she looks forward to learning their thoughts.

The dean next reported back about what she had learned about the college’s level of participation in Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS), a topic that Professor Hansen had also raised—this time on behalf of a colleague—at the committee’s last meeting. Dean Epstein informed the members that she had contacted Sarah Barr, director of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE), about this question. Ms. Barr explained that, more than a decade ago, a “Kids to Campus” program was developed to bring children to campus on a weekly basis for a meal at Valentine and for one-on-one mentoring with Amherst students. When the CCE was created, an external grant to the center was used to support Amherst students’ participation in BBBS, Ms. Barr explained. The grant enabled the CCE to provide transportation for the children participating in the program, fund meals in Valentine and afternoon snacks, purchase supplies, and hire two to three student workers to coordinate the program. The cost of the program, which served between twenty-five to thirty students annually, was about \$8,000 a year, not including transportation and staff time. When the original funding for the CCE came to a close in 2015, staff members in the Office of Student Activities and the CCE worked with BBBS to identify

other sources of funding to cover the costs associated with the program. Most recently, Ms. Barr informed the dean, the community engagement offices at Amherst, UMass, and Smith signed letters of support for a Community Foundation grant that would cover the costs associated with BBBS's work with all of its mentors, including those who are college students. The funding for the meals has not been resolved, Ms. Barr said, but she is hopeful that the Community Foundation grant will come through on June 8. If it does not, Amherst will continue to work with BBBS to find a sustainable solution that works for everyone, according to Ms. Barr. In the meantime, staff members are working with student-leaders to assess the program and to clarify what is needed for a successful launch in the fall. Ms. Barr informed the dean that, after more than thirty years with BBBS, Renee Moss has decided to step down as the organization's executive director. Ms. Barr noted that she is planning to meet with the BBBS staff or someone from the Center for Human Development (CHD), the agency that oversees BBBS, to learn more about the transition plan and how Ms. Moss's departure might change the priorities for BBBS. Having this information will help Amherst plan and ensure that the program will continue for many years to come, she said. Ms. Barr commented that one of the things that makes this issue a challenging one is that BBBS is not an independent nonprofit organization. It is one program within a massive organization that serves more than eighteen thousand people in our region and in Connecticut. Ms. Barr assured the dean that the college is committed to supporting Amherst students who wish to volunteer at BBBS, and also to ensuring that this support is provided in a way that is consistent and equitable in regard to Amherst's work with a range of non-profit organizations. At the conclusion of the dean's remarks, Professor Hansen thanked her for researching this question and asked that she extend his thanks to Ms. Barr as well.

Dean Epstein next informed the members that the charge to the Presidential Task Force on Accessibility and Inclusion has now been finalized. The members then discussed nominees to serve on the committee. The charge to the task force reads as follows:

The Presidential Task Force on Accessibility and Inclusion is charged with conducting a comprehensive review of Amherst College's policies and practices in the area of disability and inclusion. The purpose of the review is to develop an understanding of the systems in place at Amherst to support students, faculty, staff, and visitors with disabilities; increase awareness of those systems; identify and, if necessary, refine, the core principles that guide the college's approach to accessibility; identify systematic barriers to accessibility and inclusion at Amherst; recommend changes to address such barriers; and increase campus-wide awareness of accessibility as a core value of the college.

Areas of focus of the task force include, but are not limited to, academic and co-curricular life, admission, athletics, human resources, and the accessibility of facilities. As part of its work, the task force will examine policies and practices of other institutions, as appropriate. The task force will take a holistic approach to the assessment of issues of accessibility and inclusion and will not discuss or evaluate individual requests for accommodations. The president will serve in an

advisory role and will attend meetings as her schedule permits. The chief diversity and inclusion officer and the chief of campus operations will serve as co-chairs of the task force. The other members are four faculty members; an associate dean of the faculty; six students; the chief student affairs officer; the chief financial and administrative officer or his designee; the accessibility services manager; and an academic technology specialist. The chief policy officer and general counsel or her designee will serve as an advisor to the task force. Responsibility for keeping the Amherst community informed about the task force's efforts will rest with the members of the task force.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Sitze asked if Amherst's administration has given any thought to preparing for possible changes that the Trump administration may make to the Obama administration's interpretation of Title IX. The current interpretation, he noted, has led to enhanced efforts by the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights to require colleges and universities to address campus sexual assault as an issue of sex discrimination, including requiring institutions to make their adjudication systems more robust. Professor Sitze expressed the view that it is possible that President Trump may reinterpret or even revoke existing guidance documents, such as, for example, the 2011 "Dear Colleague" letter that now requires schools to complete investigations of alleged sexual misconduct within sixty days and directs institutions to evaluate cases based on the "preponderance of the evidence" standard. He noted that since 2011, the Office of Civil Rights has been conducting investigations into hundreds of schools that may have failed to respond to sexual violence. In 2014, he continued, the Obama administration announced further guidelines that were meant to protect students and recommended that institutions adopt prevention programs. Given signs indicating that the Trump administration would like to change these guidelines to a "law enforcement" model, Professor Sitze wondered whether it would be wise for Amherst to begin planning its response to these changes now. In particular, he suggested, it might be a good idea for the college to review policy proposals formulated by "sympathetic critics" of current Title IX policies (ranging from the [American Association of University Professors](#) [AAUP] to members of [Harvard Law School faculty](#), to members of the Amherst College faculty). (Professor Sitze referenced Professor Bumiller's "conscientious reporting" proposal, which is described in the Committee of Six minutes of September 21, 2015.) Knowing what Amherst's ideal adjudication system is now, he continued, might allow the college to respond thoughtfully in the midst of the chaos that likely will ensue once the current guidance is lifted. Seen in this way, he said, the current political conjuncture might actually provide a window of opportunity for Amherst to think about making improvements to its existing Title IX adjudication system.

President Martin noted the complexities of this issue and the importance of Professor Sitze's suggestion. She also commented that Amherst continually evaluates its adjudication system, striving to provide fairness and equity. President Martin noted that it is very difficult to predict the outcome of Congressional deliberations on this matter and the possible impact of decisions that might be reached. It is certainly possible that there may be a change in approach, she added.

Professor Sitze suggested that there may be benefits to trying to “get out in front” of possible decisions and to develop a vision of Amherst’s preferred process. In light of all the uncertainty around this issue, Professor Call stressed the need for faculty to continue to be educated about this important issue and to know the procedures that must be followed to be in compliance with the law. President Martin and Dean Epstein agreed and noted that not all faculty have participated in Title IX training, though such participation is required. The dean said that she will continue to seek ways of ensuring that all faculty participate in training.

Continuing with “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Frank asked President Martin about the status of the report of the External Advisory Committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Excellence and with whom the advisory committee’s report would be shared. The president responded that the advisory group has not yet submitted a report. Under terms outlined when this body was charged, the advisory committee will provide its report to the Board of Trustees and the president. President Martin said that she anticipates sharing this report with the Committee of Six this fall.

As closing remarks under “Questions to Committee Members,” Professor Van Compernelle, who is leaving the committee this spring, noted that it had been a pleasure and honor to serve on the Committee of Six this year. Conversation then turned to some final committee nominations. The committee next reviewed the nomination from the Department of Physical Education and Athletics for the Edward Hitchcock Fellowship and voted unanimously to support the awarding of the fellowship to the nominee and to forward the nomination to the faculty.

The members turned to motions being brought forward for possible inclusion on the agenda of the May 18 faculty meeting. The committee considered the following motion from the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), the rationale for which was described in a [letter from Professor Hall](#), chair of the CEP:

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) moves that the changes indicated below concerning final examinations and extensions be adopted in the *Faculty Handbook*, sections [IV.F.](#) and [IV.G.](#)

Faculty Handbook IV. F.

End-of-Semester Work

1. At the end of the semester there will be scheduled a five-day examination period (including Sunday). An instructor may choose to:
 - a. hold no final examination;
 - b. provide the student with a copy of the final examination before the beginning of the examination period, to be taken at any time during the examination period according to the procedure outlined by the instructor ("take-home examination");
 - c. provide in the envelope supplied, an examination of two or three hours in length which will

be made available at a designated examination center, the selection of the particular time period being left to the discretion of the individual student ("student self-scheduled examination");

d. hold an examination during a specific, scheduled session. Examinations to be given in this manner will be scheduled by the Registrar as to room and time (single-session examination).

2. Examinations in all courses must be completed by 5 p.m. on the last day of the examination period. Each student shall be responsible for completing his or her examinations and returning them in the manner prescribed within the designated time periods.

3. Members of the faculty will inform the Registrar, upon her/his request, of the manner in which they intend to conduct their final examinations. The Registrar will then designate examination centers for each course holding examinations under option 1 (c) and schedule those being held under option 1 (d). The Registrar will provide students and instructors with a list showing for each course the manner in which the examination is to be conducted, the date by which examinations must be completed, the days and times for examination sessions, and when pertinent, the examination center in which the examination will be conducted.

4. With the exception of previously scheduled performances and exhibitions, no final course work may be assigned or due during the reading period, which extends between 5:00 p.m. on the last day of classes through 9:00 a.m. of the first day of the examination period (voted by the faculty, May 19, 2016).

5. Faculty members will submit their grades to the Registrar by the agreed date. (Any extensions are to follow the procedures designated by Faculty vote.)

6. Prior to each examination period the student members of the Committee on Educational Policy and of the Judicial Board will arrange to remind each student that examinations are covered by the Statement of Intellectual Responsibility and will explain the manner in which it applies to these examination procedures.

~~7. A student who is prevented by illness from completing a final examination within the examination period may be granted the privilege of a special examination by the Dean of Students, who will arrange the date of the examination with the teacher.~~

~~8. A student who without an excuse from the Dean of Students fails to take a final examination shall receive a grade of "F" on the examination.~~

7. ALL OTHER REGULATIONS WITH RESPECT TO EXAMINATIONS AND FINAL WORK ARE SPECIFIED IN THE EXAMINATIONS AND EXTENSIONS SECTION

OF THE AMHERST COLLEGE CATALOG. THOSE REGULATIONS ARE BINDING AND MAY BE MODIFIED ONLY BY VOTE OF THE FACULTY.

Faculty Handbook language, IV.G

Completion of Work; Policy on Extensions

All regular course work in a given semester must be submitted by the last day of classes at 5:00 p.m.

~~Extensions beyond this time will be given only for extraordinary reasons, and only when the student has obtained the signatures of the instructor in the course and the Class Dean. Work not submitted by the date set in the extension will not be accepted for credit.~~ All final course projects, papers, and examinations in a given semester must be submitted by the end of the final examination period (voted by the faculty, May 19, 2016).

~~Only for medical reasons or those of grave personal emergency will extensions be granted beyond the second day after the examination period.~~

ALL OTHER REGULATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE COMPLETION OF WORK AND EXTENSIONS ARE SPECIFIED IN THE EXAMINATIONS AND EXTENSIONS SECTION OF THE AMHERST COLLEGE CATALOG. THOSE REGULATIONS ARE BINDING AND MAY BE MODIFIED ONLY BY VOTE OF THE FACULTY.

The members voted six in favor and zero opposed on substance of the motion and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the motion to the faculty.

The committee next considered a proposal and associated information for a new major in Latinx and Latin American studies. It was noted that the CEP has endorsed the proposal ([see the letter from Professor Hall](#)). The dean commented that, for some time, some Amherst students have been requesting that the college add a major of this kind. Dean Epstein said that she is delighted that, with the interest and contributions of three newly hired senior faculty members, a major has now been designed and a proposal brought forward. Professor Frank said that she had been pleased to learn that Amherst has such robust offerings in this area. In regard to the administration of the proposed program, the members noted that it appears that the resources needed to mount the major would be modest. The dean reported that plans call for a half-time academic department coordinator to support the program, and that a steering committee and a chair will share administrative responsibilities. The chairmanship will rotate among those faculty who have proposed the major, the dean said. Professor Call suggested that the dean share the proposed budget for the major with the Committee on Academic Priorities (CPR), and she agreed to do so. Dean Epstein, noting the importance of ensuring that the

curriculum not become overly fractured, said that, if approved, she anticipates that the program will remain a program for at least a decade. If there is sufficient interest in creating a department at that time, a proposal could be brought forward. Professor Hansen asked about the implications of establishing an Amherst major vis-à-vis the Five Colleges, and whether consultation with the other schools has taken place. The dean noted that it is expected that the creation of an Amherst major will serve to enrich further the presence of Latinx and Latin American Studies within the Five-College curriculum as a whole.

The members, who expressed enthusiasm for the major, recommended that some corrections be made before the proposal comes before the faculty and also offered some suggestions for future consideration. Professor Sitze asked how over-enrollments would operate, given that some or even many courses that would be required for the Latinx and Latin American studies major would also be required for existing majors (history, political science, English, black studies, sociology, and anthropology, etc.) He wondered whether priority for admission into these courses would be given to majors. If so, he said he would be interested in knowing additional measures that will be put into place to ensure that non-majors retain access to these courses. In regard to the proposed core course for the major (LLAS 200), the members wondered whether conditions will be created in which students who want to explore, but do not know if they wish to major, end up at the “bottom of the list.” The committee expressed the view that offering preference to majors for a 200-level course seems unusual—as many students who would be taking courses at this level have not decided on a major yet. It was noted that the “curious” could take courses across the curriculum in this field. Professor Van Compernelle suggested that the role of language in the major continue to be debated in the years ahead. A question to consider, he commented, is whether majors should be required to achieve competency in Spanish, Portuguese, or French. There are two language courses required, but, as presently phrased, they could be introductory language courses or content courses taught in the language, he noted. There is no minimum proficiency requirement at present, and he suggested that consideration be given to whether there should be. Professor Van Compernelle also noted that, while community projects and study abroad are mentioned in the major description, there is no significant place for either in the elaboration of requirements. While he personally does not think that this is necessary, he noted that, like the language issue, this topic might be something to be debated in the future. The committee then voted six in favor and zero opposed on the substance of the motion and six in favor and zero opposed to forward it to the faculty.

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and the Committee of Six recommend that the faculty approve the following motion:

That a major in Latinx and Latin American studies be established.

The committee next reviewed draft agendas for the commencement meeting of the faculty and the Labor Day meeting and voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward them to the faculty.

Conversation turned to a [revised proposal from the CEP](#) to limit instructors' access to transcripts and standardized test scores through the ACDATA system. The dean noted that arguments around equity and access have been central to the CEP's discussions about limiting automatic access to student transcripts and concerns in this arena remain at the forefront of the CEP's efforts to effect change, and to compromise. In place of a transcript, the CEP is now proposing that via ACDATA, instructors be given a list of courses that had been passed by each student, with grades omitted. Under the proposal, limited access to grades in specific courses would continue for the purpose of establishing whether students have met course prerequisites, and instructors would still have the option of requesting full transcripts from the registrar when otherwise necessary. Under the proposal, faculty advisors would continue to have full access to transcripts and standardized test scores for their advisees through ACDATA. The proposed policy would establish a default condition in which transcript access is not available through ACDATA, but will still remain available on a "need-to-know" basis upon request to the registrar. The proposed change returns transcript access to the same situation that existed prior to the electronic registration system a decade ago, and has the further advantage of being more tightly aligned with FERPA (The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) requirements, the CEP has noted. Dean Epstein reiterated that it is good to keep in mind that, under FERPA regulations, automatic access to transcripts may be problematic because of privacy concerns.

Professors Call and Hansen commented that there are legitimate educational reasons for faculty to have access to students' transcripts with grades. Professor Call noted that it is important that he is aware of the courses that students are currently taking and those that they have taken in the past, as well as their performance in past courses, in order to provide students with the support that they need to be successful. Professor Hansen agreed and noted that he would support the proposal only if the envisioned process for making a request to the registrar would allow faculty members to have access to transcripts in an electronic form in "real time"—most simply, in his view, by allowing continued access through ACDATA for faculty who have received "need-to-know" clearance. He worries that delays could be caused if the process for obtaining transcripts becomes more burdensome. Several members recalled that, as part of a previous discussion of another iteration of the proposal, the committee had been informed that Ms. Kilventon had developed a new option that would allow instructors from a department to view courses that students complete in that department and in other relevant departments and test scores. For example, faculty in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics would see the courses that each student has completed and his or her grades in the courses in the department, as well as SAT scores and Amherst placement test results. This information could be made available only to those departments requiring this information for placement and/or advising purposes. The dean confirmed that this recollection is correct.

Continuing the conversation, the members discussed the CEP's proposal to eliminate advisor access to advisee transcripts upon graduation. Several members noted that, when they write letters of recommendation for former students, they often need quick electronic access to the students' transcripts. If advisors no longer have such access, it could result in delays. In addition, some members wondered whether alumni have access to their transcripts via ACDATA. If alumni don't have access and the advisor did not as well, there would most

definitely be delays. (The registrar later confirmed that graduates of the college have electronic access to their transcripts for one year following the change in status from student to graduate in the Colleague system.) If advisors, with a student's permission, can have, by request, immediate electronic access to their former students' transcripts, the committee agreed to support the proposed change. In addition, it was noted, the CEP would have to offer greater clarity about whether they would support such immediate access for advisors, if it is possible to offer it.

Conversation turned to the proposal from the CEP to eliminate the feature of ACDATA that currently permits students to pre-register for classes for which they have not received approval from their advisors. The members agreed with the CEP's proposal that ACDATA be changed to make it impossible for students to pre-register for courses without first receiving the approval of their advisors. While agreeing that this change makes good sense, Professor Hansen said that he would support the change only if mechanisms are in place that will allow students to switch lab and discussion sections within a course without having to consult with their advisors, which could be made possible by having a mechanism that would enable advisors to approve all of the options for lab and discussion sections associated with a course prior to pre-registration. The dean agreed to pursue the members' inquiries.

Per Professor Hansen's request, the committee then discussed ways in which the college might address enrollment trends at Amherst, and ways in which departments with particularly heavy enrollment pressures could be supported further. The discussion focused largely on the science, mathematics and statistics, and economics departments. Dean Epstein noted that the administration has been addressing enrollment concerns in the sciences, in particular, via the allocation of FTEs and through granting all visiting requests in the sciences that are brought forward—including the requests for two senior professors to teach physical chemistry. In recent years, additional staff positions to support students and science faculty have been created. Recently, for example, a new math fellow position was approved for the Moss Quantitative Skills Center, and last year an academic manager position was created in the Department of Physics. The dean next shared information about the FTEs that had just been allocated and reviewed, which include a number of positions in the departments under discussion, and which of these FTEs are new lines, and which are replacements. In addition, the dean noted, she is awaiting responses to offers that have been made to two stellar scholars who were recruited under the "Five New FTEs" program, the goal of which is to bring to Amherst outstanding African American and Latinx scholars. These FTEs are outside the current FTE cap, she noted. Dean Epstein encouraged all departments to bring forward proposals through this program, as FTEs are still available.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Hansen said that it is his understanding that enrollments are not a key consideration when making FTE requests. Other members, the dean, and the president commented that enrollments are indeed one of many factors considered by the CEP when making FTE recommendations, and by the president and the dean when making final decisions. Professor Hansen said that, even so, the FTE allocation process clearly has not solved the current enrollment pressures under which science, mathematics and statistics, and economics are struggling. At the same time, he understands the complexities of allocating FTE lines based on student interest, which fluctuates over the decades. He suggested that other "levers" also be

considered, in particular that Amherst consider managing enrollments through the admission process. Professor Hansen asked that the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA) be charged with conducting a serious and systematic examination of ways in which students could be redistributed across the curriculum through admission-related strategies. The dean said that the FCAFA is already considering current admission strategies and priorities to determine if adjustments could result in bringing to Amherst students who aspire to major in disciplines across the curriculum. There are many complexities involved, she noted. Professor Moss expressed support for Professor Hansen's proposal being placed on the agenda of the FCAFA.

Professor Call, while understanding firsthand the enrollment pressures facing the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, for example, expressed excitement that students with a wide range of academic preparation are now majoring in mathematics and statistics. The dramatic increase in the number of students enrolling in courses in his department and becoming majors, and the wider range of preparation that they bring, is a direct consequence of the department's efforts to adopt a full range of pedagogical approaches, to remove barriers to success, and to provide the academic support that all students need to be successful. Ultimately, the demand for mathematics and statistics classes is a function of the department's success, though there are challenges that come with it, he commented.

Professor Hansen agreed that there is much to celebrate, while noting that there are challenges as well. The issue, in his view, isn't the total number of students; the issue is class size. He noted that Amherst has a commitment to provide all students with the educational experience that it promises. At present, students who study introductory biology and introductory and organic chemistry, for example, have very large classes and have a very different experience than students in many other introductory courses at the college. Enrollments are disproportionately skewed, and this issue should be addressed. In addition, high enrollments and an insufficient number of faculty result in the affected departments being forced to have highly structured curricula, to devote a good deal of their resources to teaching introductory classes, and being unable to offer many electives. In addition, the issue of the growing number of students intersects with faculty members' teaching loads and the amount of time that they need to spend in office hours and on working with honors students, of which there are an increasing number. The admission "lever," among other approaches to addressing these interrelated issues, should be explored, Professor Hansen reiterated. He also urged that data be collected about the issues raised. Professor Call urged that enrollment imbalances be addressed through the hiring of additional faculty. In his view, the size of the faculty should be expanded, and robust modes of support should be provided to support their work. Professor Call suggested that a modest number of additional faculty lines in targeted areas could make a substantial difference. He acknowledged that, without hiring more faculty, the current model of intensive and time-consuming academic support may not be sustainable. Professor Hansen concurred that increasing the number of faculty in departments with the most significant enrollment pressures would be the ideal solution. President Martin agreed that more tenure lines are needed. She noted that it is extremely difficult to address the needs that have been under discussion when

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available FTEs are largely replacement positions. The meeting concluded with a discussion of a personnel matter.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein
Dean of the Faculty