

Amended September 16, 2014

The first meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, September 8, 2014. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

President Martin and Dean Epstein opened the meeting by welcoming new and returning members of the Committee of Six. The dean 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 it is her understanding that 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, she has been told. Generally, conversations about these issues are made public once the matter is in a less tentative state. The committee discussed the circumstances under which it would communicate via email. The members 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. 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 3:30 P.M. on Mondays.

Continuing with her remarks about the ways in which the committee will work, the dean 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 dean informed the members that Associate Dean Janet Tobin will continue to serve as the recorder of Committee of Six minutes and that Nancy Ratner, associate dean of admission and researcher for academic projects, will serve as the recorder of the faculty meeting minutes.

The dean next informed the members that Lisa Rutherford, Amherst's chief policy officer and general counsel, will meet with the Committee of Six on September 15 to provide general legal advice related to the processes for reappointment and tenure, as an attorney does on an annual basis. Ms. Rutherford will also be available to consult with the committee about the proposal that there be a requirement that all Amherst faculty participate in Title IX training provided by the college, a topic that will be on the committee's agenda next week. Dean Epstein said that she anticipates that the committee will discuss at its next meeting whether to bring a resolution before the faculty on this question. The members then briefly discussed the need for a change in membership on a faculty committee.

Turning to a question about the Labor Day meeting of the faculty, President Martin asked the members for their thoughts about the tradition of reading the names of faculty and administrators who are new to the college, as well as the names of colleagues who have just returned from leaves. Professor Marshall noted that he is aware that some new colleagues had offered positive feedback about this aspect of the meeting. Professor Courtright said that she feels it is helpful to begin to put faces to names at this first meeting of a new academic year, but suggested that, in the interest of time, an announcement be made to hold applause until all the names are read. In regard to the administrators, the members felt that having these colleagues

introduced is valuable, and it was agreed that the administration should continue to make judgments about which positions should be included on the list of those that are regularly announced. President Martin agreed that the structure of the first faculty meeting seems to serve the community well as an occasion for introducing new members, and that the practice should be continued. Dean Epstein concurred with the committee as well.

President Martin informed the members that she is in the process of constituting a committee that will examine the place of athletics at the college. She noted that this topic was explored in a report titled “The Place of Athletics at Amherst College: A Question of Balance,” which was completed by the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst in 2002. Trustee Colin S. Diver ’65 had chaired that committee, and the report is commonly known as “the Diver Report” (see discussion and link to the report in the [Committee of Six minutes of March 31, 2014](#)). President Martin said that the ad hoc committee had recommended that the president constitute an ad hoc committee similar to the Diver Committee within a period of three to five years of the publication of the Diver Report to review the place of athletics at Amherst, and that the president appoint similar committees every three to five years. Last year’s Committee of Six had agreed that there should be a thorough study of athletics at the college. President Martin said that the new committee will have a make-up that is slightly different from that of the previous committee. She informed the members that Shirley M. Tilghman, the former president of Princeton and an Amherst trustee, has agreed to co-chair the committee with an Amherst faculty member. The president asked for the committee’s advice about faculty members who might serve on the committee and offered some suggestions. At the conclusion of the conversation, President Martin thanked the members for their suggestions.

Conversation turned to the strategic plan, a draft of which is nearing completion and will be shared with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee soon, the president said. The draft will also be provided to the Committee of Six and discussed with the members this fall. President Martin asked the members for their views on the possibility of identifying as the college’s primary strategic advantage the combination of academic rigor and accomplishments as a leader in the liberal arts, and a diverse student body that contributes in unique ways to the intellectual life of the college. The members expressed support for portraying the college in this way, noting the importance of recognizing that diversity is not an end in itself, but serves to enrich the educational and social experience Amherst offers. Professor Kingston noted that Amherst still has work to do when it comes to integrating and supporting students from diverse backgrounds. President Martin agreed, commenting that the make-up of Amherst’s student body has changed quickly, and that the college needs to find ways to take full advantage of the benefits that the diversity and difference bring. Professor Douglas commented that alumni often ask him how the college will know when it has reached its goal in regard to diversity and what diversity encompasses here.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Kingston asked about the status of efforts to address childcare needs at the college. President Martin noted that Horizons Workforce Consulting, a division of Bright Horizons, has met with members of the Amherst community on campus, after which the group provided the administration with a Dependent Care and Cost Projection Study. The study includes an assessment of the college’s childcare needs, a comparison with childcare at peer schools, models of childcare, and cost projections. The president and the dean said that the Senior Staff will soon review the report and consider the issue of childcare. The process of considering the report was delayed as a result of issues surrounding sexual misconduct that emerged in 2012, and the need to make changes to

Woodside Children's Center, President Martin said. Dean Epstein noted that Woodside has an excellent new director, but that the facility is lacking. The dean recently agreed to serve as the chair of the board of the center. President Martin said that she would like to learn more about the need and demand for childcare. This information may be covered in the report, she noted, but she will need to re-read the document, since she has not reviewed it in some time. Upgrading Woodside would be an expensive undertaking, so trade-offs in terms of moving forward with other priorities must be considered before decisions are made, she noted. The dean and the president said that they will examine the report closely to make sure that the assessment done is adequate. Professor Kingston asked if the faculty would be consulted before decisions about childcare options are made. The faculty will be kept informed and will be consulted, President Martin responded.

Professor Kingston, noting that questions about the division of responsibilities between the dean of faculty and provost had been raised at faculty meetings in April, asked the dean whether her thinking on this subject had evolved in the interim. Dean Epstein said that she and the provost work very well together, that she is pleased with the organizational structure, and that she has not experienced issues surrounding jurisdiction. An initiative on which the provost and she have been working together closely is diversifying the faculty. Provost Uvin, Dean Epstein noted, is the college's chief diversity officer. At the request of the committee, Provost Uvin outlined his primary areas of responsibility. It was noted that this information was shared with the faculty at a faculty meeting last spring (see the [April 15, 2014, faculty meeting minutes](#)). The provost explained that his duties revolve around the coordination of strategic planning and institutional research, advancing and supporting diversity and inclusion, building international programs and partnerships, and strengthening community engagement. It was agreed that it would be helpful for the members to be provided with the reporting structure for the provost's office, which was shared with the faculty at the April faculty meeting, and Associate Dean Tobin agreed to provide this information to the committee. Professor Douglas, who was on leave last year and did not attend the meeting, said that he would welcome this information. Dean Epstein noted that the provost's responsibilities encompass areas that cut across the campus and involve students, faculty, and staff.

Dean Epstein next reviewed with the members a list of possible agenda topics for the committee for the year, some of which represent issues discussed by last year's committee that were not resolved. President Martin noted that the dean and she had added to the Committee of Six agenda a new regular item called Topics of the Day. Issues that may emerge after the committee's agenda is distributed will be discussed under this rubric, it was noted. The members agreed that meeting with Alex Vasquez, dean of students, and Rick Lopez, dean of new students, would be helpful, as the members discuss the topic of first-year advising. Last year's Committee of Six had asked the Office of Student Affairs to consider this issue and to make recommendations to the committee, following the members' review of the [report of the Ad hoc Committee on Advising and the executive summary](#) of the document that was prepared by the committee. The committee and the faculty found the report's recommendations to be problematic, and the ideas have not been implemented. Dean Epstein said that she is interested in having a discussion this spring about teaching evaluations, noting that, while she respects the need for departmental autonomy, she is also concerned that there are issues surrounding equity, since practices around the development of the evaluations vary from one department to the next. She is particularly troubled that some tenure-track faculty members create their own evaluations.

Professor Marshall noted that, at one time, it was viewed as troublesome that tenure-track

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faculty members were not permitted to develop their own evaluations. Professor Courtright asked if there are plans for the Committee of Six to discuss the question of strengthening the requirement for evaluating the courses of tenured faculty. (At present, tenured faculty members are required to have one course a year evaluated.) Dean Epstein said that the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) is currently considering this issue and is likely to bring the question to the Committee of Six. Professor C. Dole asked if the creation of a teaching and learning center is on the horizon, as such a center would enhance support for, and the assessment of, teaching.

Continuing with the discussion of possible topics of conversation this year, Dean Epstein said that she is interested in having a discussion about faculty governance, but that it might be best to do so next year, when she will be in a better position to assess how current governance structures are working. Related to this topic is the question of reviewing the charges and membership structures of committees. Last year's Committee of Six had suggested that there be a review of the charge of the College Council. The committee had noted that much of the work of the College Council is focused on issues surrounding student life and that some of the business of the council is administrative and routine. Some members of the committee had felt that, since the student affairs unit is being reorganized, professionalized, and enhanced, and because the faculty's time may not be being used most effectively when it comes to some of the business of the College Council, it might make sense to reimagine the charge of the committee and possibly to envision the council as serving in an advisory role to the Office of Student Affairs. There had been a suggestion that the committee be renamed the Committee on Student Affairs. The Committee of Six had noted that the college calendar and the Honor Code currently fall under the charge of the College Council and seem to be the most prominent areas that require faculty oversight. It had been suggested that the CEP would seem to be a more logical choice to have responsibility for the oversight of the college calendar. Any changes to the College Council's charge would require a vote of the faculty, it was noted. The dean said that she would speak with the CEP about the possibility of shifting oversight of the calendar to that committee.

Concluding the conversation about possible agenda items, the dean noted that last year's Committee of Six had suggested that this year's committee consider revisions to the guidelines for external reviews of departments and programs and possible changes to the policies governing who may attend faculty meetings, speak at them, and receive the minutes of these meetings. The committee agreed that it might be helpful for this year's committee to take a fresh look at the question of attendance and voting at faculty meetings, and the committee agreed it would review the Faculty Handbook language and information assembled by Professor Harms about this issue last year. Professors Corrales and Kingston noted that the committee had discussed the possibility of having some meetings for faculty only and others for faculty and administrators. Professor Courtright expressed concern that some members of the faculty are not attending faculty meetings, though it is their right and responsibility to do so. Dean Epstein wondered if the time of the faculty meeting might be playing a role in the level of attendance, while commenting that the evening seems to be a good time for many colleagues to come to meetings. Professor Corrales agreed that finding another time would be a challenge, given all of the other activities that are already scheduled in virtually every timeslot. Professor Douglas suggested that a shift in culture surrounding attendance at faculty meetings may need to occur, if the situation is to improve. Concluding the conversation about agenda items, the dean noted that the three-year pilot for course release for Committee of Six members will need to be reviewed this spring, though the process for doing so has not yet been determined.

Professor C. Dole next asked if there are any plans for the college to adopt a new mascot,

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noting that this issue had received a lot of attention last year. President Martin informed the members that she had contacted two alumni who are prominent historians of American history to ask them to assess the accuracy of the record of acts that have been attributed to Lord Jeffery Amherst. Both of these historians expressed the view that the record is very clear on Amherst, based on their knowledge of a significant body of research. President Martin said that the college does not have a clear process for taking up the mascot question. It is her belief, and Dean Epstein agreed, that some students were intent on initiating such a process, and the president noted that a number of students and some alumni have expressed the view that the moose should take Lord Jeff's place. President Martin informed the members that the college never formally adopted a mascot, so there is actually no formal decision that would need to be overturned. Interestingly, the Lord Jeff costume appears to have disappeared. Professor C. Dole suggested that it may be time for students to decide whether or not to formally adopt Lord Jeffery Amherst as the college's official mascot since there has never been a formal selection process. Both Professor Douglas and Professor Courtright expressed the view that students and alumni should lead efforts to initiate a process to select a mascot.

Turning to the question of whether or not to have a faculty meeting on September 16, the members agreed that there was insufficient business to warrant a meeting. It was decided that the following dates should be held for possible faculty meetings during the fall semester: October 7, October 21, November 5, November 19, and December 3. The dean said that she will provide a draft agenda for a possible October 7 meeting for the committee's next meeting. Possible agenda items include annual reports from members of the Senior Staff, strategic planning, and required Title IX training for faculty members. The members agreed that it would be a good idea to have a faculty meeting on October 7.

Discussion turned to the upcoming search for a new director of the Mead Art Museum. Dean Epstein said that she plans to co-chair the search committee with Professor Harms. The full committee membership is not yet finalized, and the dean said that she will inform the members when the committee is fully staffed. Professor Corrales asked about the vision for the Mead moving forward, and whether the college is satisfied with the current model of focusing on curriculum-based programming. Professor Courtright stressed that Ms. Barker has set the museum on a wonderful path, having successfully integrated the collections into the curriculum and made support for teaching a central part of the museum's mission. Professor C. Dole noted that Ms. Barker has made it clear—in comments made as part of the strategic planning process—that she has experienced numerous frustrations, including the Mead's budget, ambiguous institutional position, and its dependence on grant money to fund much of its staff, for example. Dean Epstein pledged to make every effort to attract the best possible candidate for the directorship and to continue to move forward on the trajectory that has been so beneficial to the Amherst community under Ms. Barker's leadership of the Mead. The members then reviewed proposals for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Stipend and selected two nominees for this year's competition.

Dean Epstein next informed the members that last year's Committee of Six, at the request of committee members and Denise Gagnon, director of fellowship advising, had added a sixth faculty member to the Student Fellowships Committee on a trial basis (which has been continued this fall), in order to relieve some of the workload of the committee. Changing the membership of this standing committee on a permanent basis would require a vote of the faculty, it was noted. Having an additional member has been extremely valuable by all reports, and the dean proposed that the change be made permanent. The committee supported this proposal and

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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.

Motion

The Committee of Six proposes the following changes to current language in the *Faculty Handbook*, section IV., S.,1. t., as indicated in bold caps:

**t. The Faculty Committee on Student Fellowships.** The Faculty Committee on Student Fellowships is composed of ~~six~~ **SEVEN** members: the dean of financial aid, ~~secretary~~, ex officio; and ~~five~~ **SIX** members of the faculty, one of whom is chair. The faculty members of this committee are recommended to the Board of Trustees by the Committee of Six and serve for two-year terms.

The purpose of the committee is to review applications of students and/or recent graduates who wish to receive graduate and undergraduate fellowships and scholarships and to make recommendations on behalf of the college to the groups or foundations that award the fellowships and scholarships. Two categories of fellowships and scholarships are principally involved: a) national or international fellowships and scholarships to which the college can nominate a limited or selected number of applicants (Churchill, Fulbright, Goldwater, Marshall, Mitchell, Rhodes, Truman, and Watson are examples). For national fellowships and scholarships, the committee reviews applications, interviews applicants, and writes the letters of recommendation for nominated candidates. b) Amherst College Fellowships, for which the committee reviews applications for fellowships for graduate study, which are awarded by the trustees or faculty of Amherst College as described in detail in the *Amherst College Catalog*.

Conversation turned to the topic of the Humanities Center and the process for selecting its first director. Dean Epstein said that she is receiving responses to her recent invitation for nominations and self-nominations for the position and that she is confident that an excellent candidate will emerge. The members agreed that the director of the Humanities Center should be a visionary thinker and should be a colleague who enjoys the respect of the faculty. The dean said that she will make the selection of the founding director, in consultation with the Committee of Six, the president, and the associate deans in her office. Professor Douglas asked about the length of the term for the director. Dean Epstein responded that there will be a three-year term, though the founding director will begin the position this spring, in order to get the center up and running, and will continue in the role for three full academic years. She noted that plans are in place to establish a faculty advisory board for the center. The board will, in consultation with departments, make a recommendation to the dean of an annual theme and will also make recommendations of future directors. The dean noted that a theme-based Copeland Colloquium will occur only every two years, in order to provide the necessary funding for the center. Professor Corrales expressed the view that having a strong, active advisory board, that meets ideally more than once a semester, will be critical to the success of the center, and that it will be essential that the management of the Humanities Center is as collegial and inclusive as possible. Professor Courtright agreed and stressed that care should be taken that the theme approach does

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not dominate the activities of the center, to the exclusion of advancing work that may be outside a given theme. Benefiting as many Amherst faculty as possible—whether they participate in the theme or not—should be the goal, all agreed.

Continuing the discussion, Professor Courtright commented that the program that is imagined for the center should be both muscular and flexible. The other members concurred. President Martin agreed that focusing too heavily on themes could result in neglecting valuable work in the humanities, and that efforts should be made to be as inclusive as possible. Dean Epstein agreed that the center must embrace work beyond the identified theme, noting that five humanities center faculty fellowships will be awarded annually to Amherst faculty members who wish to affiliate themselves with the center. These colleagues need not be working within a given theme. Office space will be available for one or two of these faculty fellows to be housed during their fellowship year in the Humanities Center. The center will also offer funding to support faculty seminars by faculty who are not affiliated with the center, the dean said. In addition, the central space of the humanities center is being designed to serve as an informal gathering place for Amherst faculty members. The hope is that the space will encourage broad use of the center as a venue for intellectual exchange. Professor Corrales asked if the space will be available for use by members of the community more generally, noting that events that draw colleagues to the center will be essential to its success. The dean responded that the space will be available for use, by reservation, by the entire campus. Larger events will continue to be held in the Periodicals Reading Room, she noted. In addition, each week the Humanities Center will host a reception, with refreshments, that will be open to the entire faculty, as well as offering other events to attract faculty to the center. Professor Marshall sees the center as offering an opportunity for moving beyond a department-centric culture at the college.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

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The second meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, September 15, 2014. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder. Provost Uvin was absent.

Under "Topics of the Day," President Martin, who informed the committee that she would soon be traveling in Asia for two weeks on the college's behalf, asked the members for their thoughts about faculty interest in nurturing relationships between Amherst and educational institutions and programs in Asia. The members generally expressed support for exploring ways of strengthening the college's ties with this important part of the world, perhaps via faculty exchange programs for a summer or semester, without suggesting specific formal mechanisms for doing so. The dean noted that the Committee of Six would next meet on October 6, due to the president's travel schedule.

Discussion turned to nominations of faculty members who might serve on the search committee for the new director of athletics. Dean Epstein thanked the members for their suggestions and said that she would report back on the final make-up of the committee. (Since the Committee of Six would not be meeting again until October 6, Dean Epstein later informed the members via email of the final composition of the search committee. The members are Jack Cheney, associate dean of the faculty and Samuel A. Hitchcock Professor of Mineralogy and Geology; Ron Lembo, professor of sociology; Lyle McGeoch, Brian E. Boyle '69 Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science and dean of the class of 2017; E. J. Mills, senior coach; Nicolas Pascual-Leone '16; Cheyenne Pritchard '16; Maria Rello, director of sports medicine; Catherine Sanderson, James E. Ostendarp Professor of Psychology, chair; Elizabeth Young, assistant professor of chemistry; and Cate Zolkas, dean of admission. The dean also informed the members of the final make-up of the search committee for the new director of the Mead Art Museum, about which she had consulted with the Committee of Six earlier. The members are Catherine Epstein, dean of the faculty and professor of history, co-chair; Rosemary Frehe '17; Tekla Harms, Massachusetts Professor in Chemistry and Natural History—Geology—and director of the Beneski Museum of Natural History, co-chair; Justin Kimball, professor of art; Samuel Morse, Howard M. and Martha P. Mitchell Professor of the History of Art and of Asian Languages and Civilizations; Brooke Kamin Rapaport '84, a member of the Mead Art Museum Advisory Board; Pamela Russell, interim director of the Mead and head of education at the museum; Siyu Shen '15; Sara Smith, arts and humanities librarian; and Charles C. "Sandy" Wilkes '71, chair of the Mead Art Museum Advisory Board.)

The committee turned to a request from Sophie Murguia '17, editor-in-chief of the *Amherst Student*, that a managing news editor, rather than the editor-in-chief of the publication, attend and report on faculty meetings this year. The dean noted that the faculty has voted that the "the editor-in-chief and the publisher of the *Amherst Student* are invited guests [attending without vote] at faculty meetings for purposes of information." (See *Faculty Handbook*, IV, R., 2.). In addition, according to the handbook (in the same section), "Other guests may be invited to specific meetings of the faculty by the president with the concurrence of the Committee of Six. These persons, as guests, are not normally expected to participate in debate, although they may speak if questions are addressed to them." The dean explained that Ms. Murguia has informed her that the newspaper is sent to the printer on Tuesdays, and that the students feel that it is important that the editor-in-chief be in the office so that she can be present to review articles and to make sure that the staff gets out of the office at a reasonable time. Under the current system, with the editor-in-chief attending

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until the wee hours. When making this request, Ms. Murguia has noted that her managing news editors are all “very reliable and experienced reporters,” and that she feels that “any of them could do a terrific job at making sure that the *Student* continues to provide speedy and accurate coverage of faculty meetings.” The committee and the president agreed to grant Ms. Murguia’s request on the condition that the same member of the *Student*’s staff attend the faculty meetings throughout the year.

Dean Epstein next informed the members that her office is currently reviewing the *Faculty Handbook* to ensure that information is as up to date as possible. To this end, new language has been drafted for the section (II, B.) on the administration of the college, which is subject to change at any given time. The committee reviewed the draft and offered suggestions for revisions. It was noted that the section describing the president’s responsibilities has not been revised. Associate Dean Tobin informed the members that it is her understanding that the Board of Trustees had voted to approve the language about the president in 1933, and that it does not appear to have changed a great deal since. Professor Douglas noted that the current description of the president’s duties in the administrative section does not reference the president’s role in the reappointment, tenure, and promotion (to full professor) processes, though this information is included in sections of the handbook devoted to the procedures for these processes. President Martin said that adding such information would appear to require a vote of the Board of Trustees. She is amenable to adding language about the president’s role in these important processes and to bringing a revised position description to the board for a vote. The members also suggested revisions to the proposed language for the position of provost, the responsibilities of which had been discussed with the faculty last spring, and to the description of the dean of the faculty.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Corrales asked about the rationale for having the Emily Dickinson Museum and the Folger Shakespeare Library report to the provost, rather than to the dean of the faculty, for example. Dean Epstein said that the logic, as she understands it, is that responsibility for the oversight of relationships and partnerships that are external to the college rest with the provost, including the Dickinson and the Folger. It makes sense to her that the on-campus museums, the Beneski Museum of Natural History, and the Mead Art Museum, report to the dean, and she is comfortable with the current reporting structure for the Dickinson and the Folger. President Martin noted that the Dickinson and the Folger previously reported to the president, with the chief financial officer of the college providing financial stewardship and serving as the college’s representative to these entities. Professor Courtright argued that having the Folger report to the dean of the faculty would be preferable, given that efforts are under way to encourage more engagement between the Amherst intellectual enterprise and the Folger, with more substantive interaction with the library occurring among faculty and students. Professor Courtright noted that, as a general matter, the Folger has been expanding its mission to include more outreach, placing greater emphasis on engaging with students and the larger community, while still serving as an important resource for scholars. Since the college would like to incorporate the Folger into Amherst students’ learning experience to a greater degree, and because an Amherst faculty member serves as liaison to the library (currently Professor Bosman is in this role), Professor Courtright expressed the view that it makes more sense for the dean of faculty to have responsibility for the Folger, rather than the provost. Professor Marshall, who said that he visited the Folger recently and had been impressed with the staff’s interest in involving students in its work, noted that both the Folger and the Dickinson have a primarily public “external” focus in their programming, while serving also as an integral “internal” part of

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the academic experience of some Amherst faculty and students. President Martin said that both roles are priorities and that she would like to see both flourish.

The review of the draft language for the senior administration prompted Professor Douglas to ask whether there has been substantial growth in the senior administration in recent years. President Martin responded that, while titles of some positions have changed, only two positions at the most senior level are new—chief student affairs officer and provost. Mr. Brassord, as associate treasurer and director of facilities, had formerly reported to the chief financial officer (in the past known as the treasurer), and was promoted to the senior staff, with the title of chief operations officer. The unit that has seen the most growth recently in regard to new administrative positions is the Office of Student Affairs, where four new positions have been created. Bolstering the administrative ranks in this area was necessary to meet the needs of all students, to move toward a more robust vision of student life, to professionalize staffing, and to address a range of deficiencies, President Martin noted. Dean Epstein thanked the committee for its comments about the *Faculty Handbook* language for the administrative section and said that she would share revised language for the section at a future meeting.

Continuing with her remarks, Dean Epstein informed the committee that colleagues who have established and staffed the Arts at Amherst Initiative Steering Committee have requested that the committee be listed as an ad hoc committee on the dean of the faculty's website. The current members of the group are Professors Bashford, Levine, and Robinson and Mead Curator of American Art Vanja Malloy. These colleagues have requested that the arts departments, rather than the Committee of Six, choose the members of the Arts at Amherst Steering Committee, which is administering a fund of \$60,000 to support the arts at the college as part of a three-year initiative that is now in its second year. The Committee of Six agreed that listing the arts committee as an ad hoc committee on the website, and allowing the committee to select its own members, would be fine. While noting that service on this new ad hoc committee is significant and that it should be recognized in the reappointment, tenure, and promotion processes, the Committee of Six agreed that service on the ad hoc committee should not "protect" committee members from other committee assignments at the college. In the view of the Committee of Six, one of the great benefits of college committee service is the opportunity to get to know colleagues across the campus. Dean Epstein said that she would convey this decision to the members of the newly named ad hoc committee.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," on behalf of colleagues who had approached him to ask that he raise their concern about the issue, Professor C. Dole noted that there appears to be a lack of adequate signage to identify the Women's and Gender Center, Queer Resource Center and Multicultural Center; he asked whether this situation might be indicative of a lack of commitment to the centers and wondered when the problem might be addressed. President Martin said that the provost, who oversees the centers, and she strongly support their work. Associate Dean Tobin was asked to look into this matter, and she agreed to contact the provost and the chief of campus operations. President Martin said, that if the signage is indeed inadequate, the situation will be remedied.

Continuing with "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Corrales noted the *Amherst Student* had just published a [highly positive review](#) of the newly opened social space in the renovated Powerhouse. President Martin said that the new space is off to a successful start, and that students seem to be gravitating to it. The members expressed interest in touring the space, which was designed by Bruner/Cott Architects and Planners of Cambridge, Massachusetts, which also designed the MASS MoCA museum in North Adams. The dean said

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that her office would work with the members and Mr. Brassord to schedule a tour.

At 4:20 P.M., Lisa Rutherford, chief policy officer and general counsel, joined the meeting for the purpose of offering general legal advice related to the tenure process and answering questions posed by the committee. Following the discussion about tenure, conversation turned to the proposal that it be a requirement that Amherst faculty participate in Title IX training provided by the college, and the possibility of bringing a resolution on this topic to the faculty.

The discussion began with Professor Kingston expressing concern about asking the faculty to vote on what seems to be a legal requirement. What would it mean in the unlikely event of the faculty voting “no” on the resolution, for example? President Martin responded that there could be a legal issue, perhaps, under such a circumstance, but there would also be a message sent to students that faculty are not invested in doing everything that they can to help stop sexual assault and misconduct. Such a message would be deeply troubling, it was agreed. Ms. Rutherford explained the distinctions between a statute and a regulation, which is relevant to the question at hand, she and the president noted. While not law, regulations still have the force of law. Ms. Rutherford informed the members that Title IX protects people from discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. The Department of Education, through the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), enforces Title IX. Penalties for being out of compliance with regulations include the denial of federal funding. Ms. Rutherford explained that, in its guidance document, the OCR directs all public and private elementary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities to provide training to all employees likely to witness or receive reports of sexual violence, including professors. Furthermore, based on faculty training requirements found in recent resolution agreements between colleges and universities under investigation by the OCR, it is anticipated the OCR will require the same of Amherst’s faculty. If Amherst were to mandate training of its own accord without being specifically directed to do so by the OCR, the agency likely would recognize the college’s deep commitment to such a policy.

Professor C. Dole expressed the view that it would be useful to have the faculty vote on a resolution to support mandated training. His concern is not this issue necessarily, he said, but the precedent that future decisions might be made without involving the faculty. Professor Douglas said that “administration creep” does not concern him in this instance, as the matter concerns compliance with a federal regulation. Professor Marshall commented that votes are not taken to follow the regulations of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), for example, and said that he does not think it would be appropriate for the faculty to vote on what seems to be a similar matter of compliance. He noted that science departments often follow practices that go beyond what is strictly required by federal law, but which may be recommended by an agency—when doing so makes educational and/or ethical sense. Professor Douglas said that he supports this idea of “following the law-plus” in regard to Title IX.

Turning to the possibilities for implementation of a requirement that faculty complete Title IX training, Dean Epstein asked what the mechanisms might be to ensure that faculty participate. At present, many faculty members, including department chairs, have not taken training, she noted. The committee agreed that completing Title IX training could be a condition of hire for new faculty and could be included in their contracts. Other suggestions of personal repercussions that might be implemented when a colleague does not respect the training

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requirement ranged from withholding pay to making an institutional decision that the college's insurance would not protect the individual, i.e., indemnify those who choose not to be trained. Professor Courtright said that she agreed with Professor Kingston, that there should not be a faculty vote on what is basically a legal obligation. Professors Corrales, Douglas, and Marshall concurred. The members then voted six in favor and zero opposed on the substance of the resolution below, and one in favor and five opposed on forwarding the resolution to the faculty.

**RESOLUTION ON REQUIRING TITLE IX TRAINING**

The faculty supports the establishment of a requirement that those teaching at Amherst College participate in Title IX training provided by the college.

With the question of the resolution settled, the committee discussed how best to move forward with requiring training, a step the members supported. The committee agreed to endorse the college's efforts to bring Amherst into full compliance with Title IX, including required training for faculty. It was agreed that Dean Epstein should send a letter to the faculty announcing that Title IX training is a requirement for faculty and outlining how this policy will be implemented going forward. The dean said she would draft the letter and share it with the Committee of Six to receive input. The committee agreed to endorse the final version of the letter. The committee thanked Ms. Rutherford for her advice, and she left the meeting at 5:20 P.M.

Discussion turned briefly to the motion that the committee had recently approved to add an additional faculty member to the Faculty Committee on Student Fellowships. The dean asked if the Committee of Six would like to propose further revision to the charge of the fellowships committee, now that it has come to the Committee of Six's attention that, for the past six years, the Health Professions Committee, rather than the Fellowships Committee, has been reviewing applications for Churchill and Goldwater Scholarships. The dean noted that the charge of the Committee on Student Fellowships currently includes the Churchill and the Goldwater on the list of fellowships for which the committee reviews applications.

Continuing, Dean Epstein informed the members that Denise Gagnon, director of fellowship advising, has told her that, even with the Health Professions Committee reading applications for the Churchill and Goldwater, the Committee on Student Fellowships has a large task at hand. Ms. Gagnon reported that she tries to limit the number of applications reviewed by the Health Professions Committee for the Churchill and Goldwater. Both of these scholarships have strongly stated eligibility requirements, and only applications that meet these high standards are reviewed, Ms. Gagnon explained. Amherst can nominate four candidates for the Goldwater and two for the Churchill, and it is rare that the Health Profession Committee is asked to read many applications beyond those numbers, according to Ms. Gagnon. She also noted that there are no in-person interviews for the Goldwater and Churchill, so the Health Professions Committee is not asked to interview candidates. The committee is asked to write a letter of endorsement for the two Churchill nominees, but they are often provided with letters of endorsement that have already been written on behalf of these applicants for other awards. No letter of endorsement is required with the Goldwater applications, but one paragraph stating why an applicant has been nominated is required, and the Health Professions Committee has been helping with that task. Ms. Gagnon noted that, even though the Churchill and Goldwater scholarships do not require interviews and have limited nominations, it is "a huge relief" to the Committee on Student Fellowships not to have to carry out the tasks associated with these applications; these duties come in October and November, when the Committee

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on Student Fellowships is already interviewing and writing for other awards. Ms. Gagnon reported that these tasks came at a time in the year when the Health Professions Committee is not reviewing other applications. She expressed hope that the Committee on Student Fellowships would not be asked to add the Churchill and Goldwater to its responsibilities. She informed the dean that it is unusual that one committee is asked to review so many awards and commented that, at many of Amherst's peer institutions, different committees are asked to review different awards, especially in respect to the Fulbright, which often has its own committee. The members asked the dean to gather data on the success rate of Amherst's Churchill and Goldwater applications during the past fifteen years to inform a future conversation about this matter, and she agreed to do so. The committee then discussed a proposal for a Senior Sabbatical Fellowship and voted unanimously to approve it.

The members next reviewed a draft agenda for a possible October 7 faculty meeting. It was agreed that, since the members had decided not to bring the Title IX resolution forward, and because members of the senior staff would prefer not to offer short reports at this time, it would make sense not to have a faculty meeting on October 7. It was agreed that, if the strategic planning report is ready for discussion on October 21, a faculty meeting might be scheduled for that date. The members said that it would be desirable, at some point in the future, for the chief financial officer, the dean of admission and financial aid, the chief of campus operations, and the chief advancement officer to offer reports at a faculty meeting. President Martin agreed to bring this matter forward to the Senior Staff.

Conversation returned to the topic of the policy in place for who may attend faculty meetings, speak at them, and receive the minutes of these meetings. In advance of its meeting, the committee had reviewed the *Faculty Handbook language* and information assembled by Professor Harms about this issue last year. In the spirit of inclusiveness, the members agreed that there seems to be little compelling reason to winnow down the list of administrators who may attend faculty meetings on a regular basis, while noting that it might be helpful for many of those who attend faculty meetings to know that they should not feel obligated to do so. There was general support for the idea of having some meetings for faculty only, when President Martin feels that an issue warrants such a structure. President Martin said she can imagine times when it would be helpful to have meetings without administrators present, in order to gain the fullest sense of the faculty's views about a college matter and/or for purposes of confidentiality.

The committee next discussed the related question of how to encourage faculty who are not coming to faculty meetings to attend, given that it is their right and responsibility to do so, in contrast to some non-faculty members, who have the right but not necessarily the obligation to attend. Dean Epstein noted that her office has organized a fall luncheon for new faculty for the purpose of discussing faculty governance. The importance of attending faculty meetings will be stressed at that event, she noted. In response to the question of whether faculty members are aware that they should write to the dean to inform her if they will not be present at a faculty meeting, Dean Epstein said that her experience is limited in this regard. Several colleagues did write for this purpose in advance of the Labor Day faculty meeting, which had been the first faculty meeting during her tenure as dean, she said. The dean agreed to remind faculty that they should write to her if they cannot attend a faculty meeting, and said that she would think about ways to encourage more faculty to attend faculty meetings on a regular basis.

The meeting ended with President Martin informing the members that Richard Keeling, of the higher education consulting firm Keeling Associates, will be on campus on October 8 and

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October 9 to talk with faculty, including the members of major faculty committees, about strategic planning. She asked if the Committee of Six would be willing to meet with Mr. Keeling either individually or as a committee. The members agreed to work with the dean's office on scheduling to meet with Mr. Keeling.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Subsequent to the meeting, the dean shared with the members via email [a letter](#) that she had received on September 18 from the Science Faculty Steering Committee. In the letter, which is addressed to the Committee of Six, the Science Faculty Steering Committee requested that the Committee of Six consider lengthening the January term period to be three full weeks, as it had been prior to the 2010-2011 academic year. Some members expressed support for the proposal, while noting that recommendations for the college calendar are forwarded to the Committee of Six by the College Council. The College Council will be considering the 2015-2016 calendar soon. The members requested that the letter from the Science Faculty Steering Committee be appended to these minutes and that the proposal to lengthen the January term be forwarded to the College council. The dean agreed to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

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The third meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, October 6, 2014. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under "Topics of the Day," President Martin, who had just returned from two weeks in Asia, shared some impressions of her trip. She informed the members that, while in Beijing, she had met with leaders from Zhejiang University who are in the process of establishing a transnational liberal arts college, in association with the university. Those planning the launch of the new college expressed interest in having members of Amherst's faculty serve on the institution's advisory board and participate in other collaborative opportunities. President Martin, who said that she did not make any commitments on the college's behalf to become involved in the life of this venture, has asked for more information about possibilities for collaboration. She plans to share this information with the faculty in the future. The president noted that the gatherings that she had with alumni groups in Asia were well attended, and those who had participated seemed to appreciate coming together as a community for these events. The interviews that President Martin did with local media generated positive publicity for Amherst. President Martin said that the Seoul alumni group had been pleased that an Amherst president had journeyed to their city/country (President Martin is the first to do so), noting that students from South Korea represent one of the largest groups of international students at the college. The committee expressed support for raising the college's profile in Asia and for fostering closer ties in this important part of the world.

Continuing with "Topics of the Day," President Martin informed the members that the Board of Trustees will have meetings at the college from October 16 through October 18. Plans for the meetings include a presentation about changes in the Office of Student Affairs, as well as a presentation on the preliminary designs for the new dormitories and the ways in which these buildings will interact with the new Greenway. President Martin expressed admiration for the perspectives brought to the projects by Mohsen Mostafavi, dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Design, who has been engaged as architect of counsel for the science center, Greenway, and Greenway dormitories projects. Mr. Mostafavi has been participating in a collaborative process with the design team, the president noted. As part of the meetings with the trustees, Dean Epstein will provide information on the changing demographics of the faculty and the opportunities for the college that are presented by the spate of retirements that have occurred since 2000, and the significant number of retirements that will occur over the next decade. President Martin commented that roughly one-third of the faculty will be replaced between 2010 and 2024. The dean discussed the importance of thinking strategically and broadly about the curriculum as this period of intensive hiring continues. Professor Kingston asked if consideration of how to make the best use of the opportunity that the hiring presents in regard to the curriculum is being included in discussions about strategic planning. President Martin and Dean Epstein said that this topic is an important part of planning, noting that they agreed that the faculty should lead the examination of the issue. Dean Epstein said that she has suggested that an ad hoc committee be constituted for this purpose. Professor Marshall asked if such a committee would be tasked with thinking about areas that Amherst may not wish to have as part of the curriculum in the future, as well as those that it might wish to add. Dean Epstein said that she imagines that the committee's mandate will include taking up this question.

Under "Announcements," Dean Epstein asked the members for their impressions of data provided by Denise Gagnon, director of fellowship advising, at the committee's request, about the number of Amherst winners of Goldwater and Churchill Fellowships between 1999 and

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2007. The members agreed that it appears that there has been little difference in the outcome of the nomination process for these fellowships during the period in which letters of nomination were written by members of the Committee on Student Fellowships and the period in which they have been written by members of the Health Professions Committee. Since Professor Marshall had pointed out that current practice in regard to the nomination process is not consistent with the charge of the Committee on Student Fellowships—which the members are proposing to revise in order to add an additional faculty member—the Committee of Six considered whether the charge of that fellowships committee should be further revised to remove the reference to the Churchill and Goldwater Fellowships. After some discussion, the members agreed that, even with the addition of a sixth faculty member, the fellowships committee is overburdened. It was decided that the Health Professions Committee should be charged with writing letters of nomination for the Churchill and Goldwater Fellowships, and that the fellowships committee should be formally relieved of this assignment. The members then voted six in favor and zero opposed on the substance of the following motion and six in favor and zero opposed on forwarding it to the faculty:

The Committee of Six proposes the following changes to current language in the *Faculty Handbook*, [section IV, S., 1.](#), as indicated in bold caps:

**t. The Faculty Committee on Student Fellowships.** The Faculty Committee on Student Fellowships is composed of ~~six~~ **SEVEN** members: the dean of financial aid, ~~secretary~~, ex officio; and ~~five~~ **SIX** members of the faculty, one of whom is chair. The faculty members of this committee are recommended to the Board of Trustees by the Committee of Six and serve for two-year terms.

The purpose of the committee is to review applications of students and/or recent graduates who wish to receive graduate and undergraduate fellowships and scholarships and to make recommendations on behalf of the college to the groups or foundations that award the fellowships and scholarships. Two categories of fellowships and scholarships are principally involved: a) national or international fellowships and scholarships to which the college can nominate a limited or selected number of applicants (~~Churchill~~, Fulbright ~~Goldwater~~, Marshall, Mitchell, Rhodes, Truman, and Watson are examples). For national fellowships and scholarships, the committee reviews applications, interviews applicants, and writes the letters of recommendation for nominated candidates. b) Amherst College Fellowships, for which the committee reviews applications for fellowships for graduate study, which are awarded by the trustees or faculty of Amherst College as described in detail in the *Amherst College Catalog*.

Dean Epstein next reported on a response to the committee's inquiry about the problem of a lack of adequate signage at the Women's and Gender Center, Multicultural Center, and Queer Resource Center. Jim Brassord, chief of campus operations, has informed the dean that Provost Uvin had requested that signage be created for the centers some time ago. The project had unfortunately stalled, due to the workload demands of colleagues in Mr. Brassord's office over the summer. Mr. Brassord reported that a signage proposal has now been brought forward and is being reviewed by Alex Vasquez, dean of students, and his colleagues. President Martin commented that challenges with signage on campus extend beyond the centers, and the members concurred.

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Continuing with announcements, Dean Epstein discussed the creation of an editorial board for the Amherst College Press. She explained that it is the hope that the new board, which is expected to meet four times a year, will play an important role in the press's development. The committee had been provided with [a description of the functions and responsibilities of the editorial board](#) prior to the meeting. Dean Epstein informed the members that Professors Courtright, Engelhardt, Sanborn, Schmalzbauer, Sitze, Walker, and Associate Dean Sarat have agreed to serve on the board. Mark Edington, director of the press, will serve ex officio. Professor C. Dole asked about the process for inviting colleagues to serve. Dean Epstein said that Mr. Edington had proposed names of potential members, and that Associate Dean Sarat and she had reviewed the list of nominees and had selected colleagues to invite. Involvement with one of the press's series was a criterion, she noted. Series editors will serve on the board during the time that they are in this role, Dean Epstein said. Other faculty members will have two-year terms. Professor Corrales suggested that, in future, it would be helpful to have a faculty member who works in a quantitative area on the board. The members agreed that the board could be more narrowly defined at this stage, but that it might expand if the press begins to publish in quantitative fields. It does not have this focus at present.

Continuing with announcements, the dean informed the members that Registrar Kathleen Kilventon has raised the issue of asking persons auditing Amherst courses to provide indentifying information. The only auditors who currently do so are those who require the use of Moodle. The registrar would like to collect and enter into Datatel the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of all auditors so that the college will have necessary information in the event of an emergency. The members did not object to the registrar gathering such information. The committee next reviewed revised language about the senior administration for the *Faculty Handbook* and suggested further changes to that section. When the final version of the section is complete, which should be soon, the members agreed that it should be shared as an attachment to the Committee of Six minutes, in addition to being added to the *Faculty Handbook*.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Douglas requested that a point of clarification be mentioned in these minutes about an issue described in the Committee of Six minutes of September 15, 2014. In those minutes, it is noted that the committee had voted on a motion that the faculty support the establishment of a requirement that faculty participate in Title IX training. In voting six to zero in favor of the substance of the motion, Professor Douglas pointed out that the members had technically voted to approve the faculty requiring itself to take this step, but had then voted not to bring the motion to the faculty. The committee's intention had been to indicate its own support for requiring training for all faculty, all members agreed, but a lack of support for the motion's mechanism (having a faculty vote on what is essentially a matter of compliance) for achieving it. However, the vote could be interpreted as the committee "legislating" for the faculty. It was agreed that a link from the September 15 minutes to the language in the minutes of October 6 should correct any misinterpretations that might have arisen, for which the members apologized. The provost left the meeting, and the members turned to personnel matters. Provost Uvin returned to the meeting after the discussion of personnel matters concluded.

The committee next reviewed a draft agenda for a possible October 21 faculty meeting. The members were informed that the strategic planning report, which had been a possible topic of discussion for the meeting, would not be ready by October 21. The dean noted that the Faculty Library Committee has recommended that the Committee of Six invite the

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librarian of the college and members of the library staff to offer thoughts at a faculty meeting this fall about how “transformations in pedagogy and technology” should inform “a new conception of the library,” and that the faculty then convene as a committee of the whole for a discussion of the same. The Library Committee has noted that the [\*Report of the Committee on the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning\*](#) calls on the college to “re-imagine the library for the coming decades and to replace Frost Library.” The Library Committee, in requesting to make a presentation to the faculty, noted that “the library has historically served as a focal point for intellectual life on campus, and we believe it will continue to occupy a central place in the future. However, transformations in pedagogy and technology will require a new conception of the library.” The Library Committee referenced page six of the report mentioned above. The members agreed that, while such a presentation would be important and informative, it would be best to wait to have a presentation at a faculty meeting until after the strategic planning process generates a set of priorities. In this way, proposals about the library can be weighed against other needs and priorities, rather than focusing on one issue in isolation without the benefit of seeing how that issue fits within a larger plan.

Continuing the discussion of a possible faculty meeting, the members decided that it would be informative for the faculty to hear reports from the chief financial officer and the chief of campus operations. At a future meeting, the dean of admission and financial aid, who has indicated that she will be traveling on the college’s behalf on October 21, should report as well, the members agreed. As part of their consideration of whether to have a faculty meeting, the members discussed current language in the *Faculty Handbook* about committees on which the dean of students is a member. The conversation was prompted by questions posed to the committee by Professor Crowley (see [September 11, 2014 email](#) ) in his capacity as chair of the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA). Professor Crowley has asked about the make-up of the FCAFA this year, given the structural changes that have taken place within the Office of Student Affairs, in particular that the highest ranking administrator in the office is now the chief student affairs officer, and not the dean of students.

The members reviewed a list of committee charges that may need to be revised in light of the redistribution of responsibilities among positions in student affairs. The committee agreed that, as a first step, it would be informative to share with the faculty information about the new vision for the Office of Student Affairs and the services that are now being provided, which have been implemented through restructuring the office and hiring a new cohort of experienced and skilled student-life professionals. President Martin offered high praise for the changes that Ms. Coffey has made since assuming the position of chief student affairs officer; the president commented on the outstanding qualifications of the new administrators and the effectiveness of their work thus far. She expressed confidence that student life at Amherst will now be supported in ways that will represent significant improvements—in the ability to meet individual students’ needs, and in building and fostering a vibrant and respectful community on campus. The members agreed that the changes seem promising. The dean commented that there is a need to determine who from the Office of Student Affairs should serve on the committees that list the dean of students as a member, pointing out that the nomenclature in the *Faculty Handbook* is a vestige of the previous structure of the office. Since the chief student affairs officer now leads the office once headed by the dean of students, and because the position of dean of students now has a different set of responsibilities, the members agreed that it would be best for the chief

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student affairs officer or her designee to serve, for a provisional period, on committees on which the dean of students is now listed. This approach would give the chief student affairs officer time to develop a proposal for which positions from her office should be added to committee charges on a permanent basis. While not all committees require a vote to revise their charges, the Committee of Six agreed that the best course would be to bring a motion to the faculty on October 21 to propose that, for the 2014-2015 academic year, the chief student affairs officer, or her designee, serve on committees that currently list the dean of students as a member (see *Faculty Handbook* [section IV, S.,1. .](#)). The committee then voted six in favor and zero opposed on the content of the motion and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the motion to the faculty. The committee later voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward the faculty meeting agenda to the faculty.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

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The fourth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, October 20, 2014. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under "Announcements," President Martin discussed with the members the make-up of the committee that is being constituted to examine the place of athletics at the college and said that she would announce the membership at the faculty meeting the next evening. The president commented that, in considering the structure of the committee, she has sought to mirror the make-up of the previous committee charged with studying this issue, with a couple of exceptions. Trustee Colin S. Diver '65 had chaired the earlier committee—the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst, commonly known as the "Diver Committee"—which had included two other trustees (three in total), three members of the faculty, the director of athletics, the dean of students, and two students. President Martin said that, for the new committee, instead of having a trustee chair, she has decided that the committee will be co-chaired by a trustee (Shirley M. Tilghman, the former president of Princeton) and a faculty member (Patrick Williamson, Edward H. Harkness Professor of Biology). Since there is currently an interim director of athletics and an ongoing search for a permanent director, President Martin said that she has chosen to appoint head coach of men's soccer Justin Serpone to represent the athletics department on the committee. The other members of the new committee are Greg Call, Peter R. Pouncey Professor of Mathematics and former dean of the faculty; Andrew Nussbaum '85; Monica Ringer, associate professor of history and of Asian languages and civilizations; Christopher Tamasi '15; and Alex Vasquez, dean of students. President Martin said that there would be one additional student appointed to the committee, once the Association of Amherst Students selects one. President Martin noted that it had been an oversight that a third trustee had not been invited to serve on the committee. She will consult with Cullen Murphy '74, chairman of the Board of Trustees, and Ms. Tilghman about this matter and will appoint an additional trustee only if Mr. Murphy and Ms. Tilghman feel that doing so is necessary.

President Martin said that the Diver Committee had recommended that the president constitute an ad hoc committee similar to the Diver Committee within a period of three to five years of the 2002 publication of the "Diver Report." The purpose would be to review the place of athletics at Amherst. Further, the Diver Committee had advised that the president appoint similar committees every three to five years. President Martin expressed the view that the charge to the Diver Committee is both comprehensive and focused, and she suggested that the same charge be given to the new committee. The members agreed. Professor Douglas suggested that the new committee also be charged with examining the college's record of addressing the issue of concussions among student-athletes and with exploring changes to existing practices in light of recent studies on the relationship between certain sports and neuropathology. The committee, the president, and the dean supported this proposal and suggested that language be added to paragraph three of the charge (see language in red below).

The Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst will weigh over the next academic year the extent to which our athletic programs are consistent with the overall purposes of the College. The ideal at Amherst is that our athletic teams and indeed all of our extracurricular activities should enhance

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the intellectual and social experience of our diverse student body. How well do they perform this complex function?

To answer this question the committee should scrutinize the experience of all students, but especially those participating in varsity and club athletics at the College. What are the advantages and disadvantages of such participation for our students? Do they vary according to the backgrounds and interests of students at Amherst today? Does participation in either varsity or club athletics foster intellectual and social life at the College? Does participation foster our diversity? Do the athletes at Amherst thrive as much as the non-athletes?

Do the varsity teams play a different role from the club teams or from other extracurricular activities such as the student radio or newspaper? How much time do the various forms of athletic practice and preparation require of undergraduate participants? Has the time commitment expanded significantly over the last 20 or 30 years? Has it taken away from the time devoted to study and classroom attendance? As a small college, Amherst has an active roster of varsity and club sports: Is the number of such teams appropriate for a college of Amherst's size and ambition? Would a smaller number ease the tensions between academic promise and extracurricular talent in admissions? Has Amherst done enough in striving for equity between the sexes in the club and varsity sports we now offer? **HOW SHOULD AMHERST ADDRESS THE EMERGING SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE LONG-TERM HEALTH RISKS OF CONCUSSIONS? HAS THE COLLEGE WORKED EFFECTIVELY TO MITIGATE THE DANGERS POSED TO STUDENT-ATHLETES BY CONCUSSIONS? HOW DOES AMHERST'S APPROACH TO THIS ISSUE AND THE POLICIES THAT THE COLLEGE HAS PUT IN PLACE COMPARE WITH THOSE OF PEER INSTITUTIONS?**

The role of coaches at the College has evolved over the last decades, often in response to forces in our larger culture and in our athletic conference. To what extent and in what ways has this evolution affected the place of sports in undergraduate life? To what extent has it affected the relationships between the coaches and their colleagues on the Faculty and in the administration? Are there reforms that might improve the relationship between coaching and the many other roles on campus that contribute to teaching and learning?

Amherst's athletic conference, the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC), brings together eleven colleges and universities in the northeast. Its rules provide for competition under the more general rubric of Division III of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Is NESCAC or the NCAA itself a desirable and helpful venue for our varsity competitions, particularly with our historic rivals such as Williams or Wesleyan?

The committee will report to the Board and the Faculty with suggestions of policy and principle to guide the College over the next decade.

Professor C. Dole posed the question of whether the new committee should be tasked with considering whether the college should adopt a new mascot. There was general agreement that it would be advisable to focus on that issue as a separate matter.

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Continuing with “Announcements,” President Martin informed the committee that the trustee meetings that had concluded on Saturday had gone well, noting that there had been presentations to the entire board about student life and about the science center, residence halls, and greenway projects. President Martin commented that Dean Epstein had an informative conversation with the Instruction Committee of the board. The dean had discussed the changing demographics of the faculty and the opportunities for the college that are presented by the significant number of retirements that have occurred since 2000, and those that will occur over the next decade. The president noted that the trustees had attended a dedication of the Powerhouse and that the board, like the wider campus community, had judged the new space to be a tremendous success.

Conversation turned to a revised description of the position of chief student affairs officer for use in the *Faculty Handbook*. The members found the new version to be acceptable. During the discussion of the language for the position, the question of the expansion of the staff in the Office of Student Affairs was raised. President Martin informed the members that, while there has been a great deal of hiring in this area in recent months, there were a number of vacant positions to fill. In the end, just three FTEs were added to the Office of Student Affairs. Continuing with the recap of the board meetings, President Martin noted that the Board of Trustees had approved the Committee of Six’s proposal to add language about the president’s role in faculty personnel matters to the description of the president’s position in the handbook. [The new language about the president and the senior administration of the college](#) is now posted in the *Faculty Handbook*.

Following up on the committee’s recent conversation about the creation of an editorial board for the Amherst College Press, Dean Epstein informed the members that Michael Witmore, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, has agreed to serve as a resource for the board. The committee agreed that Mr. Witmore’s expertise would be most welcome.

Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Marshall commented that the search committee for the director of athletics seems to have less representation from the Department of Physical Education and Athletics than there has been for prior searches for the position. Dean Epstein said that the current search committee membership (Jack Cheney, Samuel A. Hitchcock Professor of Mineralogy and Geology and associate dean of the faculty; Ron Lembo, professor of sociology; Lyle McGeoch, Brian E. Boyle ’69 Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science and dean of the class of 2017; E.J. mills, senior coach; Nicolas Pascual-Leone ’16; Cheyenne Pritchard ’16; Maria Rello, director of sports medicine; Catherine Sanderson, James E. Ostendarp Professor of Psychology, chair; Elizabeth Young, assistant professor of chemistry; and Cate Zolkos, dean of admission) is similar to that of the committee that had conducted the search for the last director in 2005-2006. The membership of that committee was the following: Dale Peterson, chair, professor of English and Russian; Amy P. Demorest, professor of psychology; Allen Hart, Dean of New Students and associate professor of psychology; Scott Kaplan, assistant professor of computer science; Marian Matheson, director of institutional research; Nick Nichols, head swimming coach and director of aquatics; Maria N. Rello, then-associate director of sports medicine; Cate Zolkos, then-associate dean of admission; Patrick Benson ’08, and Katharine Roin ’06.

Continuing with “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Kingston asked Provost Uvin if the position of dean of international students and global engagement, which the provost had recently announced and which reports to him, is a new position. Provost Uvin responded that the position, which has been assumed by Lauren Clarke, comprises two parts, one old and one new. As dean of international students, Ms. Clarke will work closely with

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colleagues in the Office of Student Affairs to support international students, coordinating with other departments, including Admission, the Career Center, and Advancement. These responsibilities were previously part of the portfolio of one of the class deans in the Office of Student Affairs. As dean of global engagement, a new role, Ms. Clarke will work with faculty, staff, students, and alumni to develop programs that will internationalize Amherst's liberal arts education and campus life for all Amherst students, encourage closer ties between international and domestic students, support international faculty and staff on campus, and assist with special projects related to other domains of internationalization. The provost explained that the position is largely budget neutral.

The committee next discussed whether there was sufficient business to have a faculty meeting on November 4, and decided that the next faculty meeting would likely be on November 18, when consideration of a draft of the strategic planning report will be on the agenda. Conversation then turned to a request from Professor Friedman, chair of the Committee on Student Fellowships, to amend the Committee of Six's motion to revise the charge of that committee. The members reviewed a draft of the amendment that he had shared, which appears below:

**t. The Faculty Committee on Student Fellowships.** The Faculty Committee on Student Fellowships is composed of ~~six~~ **SEVEN** members: the ~~dean of financial aid, secretary, ex officio;~~ **DIRECTOR OF FELLOWSHIP ADVISING**, ex officio, and ~~five~~ **SIX** members of the faculty, one of whom is chair. The faculty members of this committee are recommended to the Board of Trustees by the Committee of Six and serve for two-year terms.

The purpose of the committee is to review applications of students and/or recent graduates who wish to receive graduate and undergraduate fellowships and scholarships and to make recommendations on behalf of the college to the groups or foundations that award the fellowships and scholarships. Two categories of fellowships and scholarships are principally involved: a) national or international fellowships and scholarships to which the college can nominate a limited or selected number of applicants (~~Churchill~~, Fulbright ~~Goldwater~~, Marshall, Mitchell, Rhodes, Truman, and Watson are examples). For national fellowships and scholarships, the committee reviews applications, interviews applicants, and writes the letters of recommendation for nominated candidates; b) Amherst College Fellowships, for which the committee reviews applications for fellowships for graduate study, which are awarded by the trustees or faculty of Amherst College as described in detail in the *Amherst College Catalog*.

It was agreed that, at the faculty meeting the next day, Professor Friedman should be recognized after Professor Kingston introduced the Committee of Six's motion, and that the amendment, for which the Committee of Six expressed support, should be distributed in hard copy to the faculty at the meeting.

The members next reviewed a [draft of a letter to the faculty](#) from the president and the dean announcing the expectation that the faculty attend Title IX training, in keeping with federal law. The members suggested some revisions and then endorsed the letter. Provost Uvin left the meeting. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

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The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended November 12, 2014**

The fifth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, October 27, 2014. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with President Martin informing the members that she and Dean of Students Alex Vasquez had met for about two hours the previous evening with about twenty-five students who are members of the student group Black Lives Matter. During the conversation that ensued, the students asked if it would be possible for some members of the group to meet with the Committee of Six. The president said that she had asked the students to communicate their request in writing to Associate Dean Tobin, who would then contact the committee on their behalf. The students sent an email about a half-hour before the committee's meeting, and Associate Dean Tobin distributed the document to the members at the meeting, as there was not sufficient time to provide it beforehand. The email read as follows:

Dear Dean Tobin,

I hope this email finds you well. As you may know, a group named Black Lives Matter organized a week of awareness around police brutality against persons of color. Although the Awareness Week is over, we feel we need to extend our efforts towards bringing sustained awareness of race relations at Amherst. We are reaching out to you, per the advice of President Martin and Dean Vasquez, to help us address the Committee of Six regarding this initiative. We understand that the Committee will be meeting on Monday, October 27, 2014. We are aware of the short notice but we ask that you please forward the following message to the participating faculty so that they may be aware of our request to be heard at their meeting this evening:

Dear Professor Corrales, Professor Courtright, Professor Dole, Professor Douglas, Professor Kingston, and Professor Marshall,

We hope this email finds you well. We are reaching out to you all, as the Executive Committee of the Faculty, to address an urgent issue. As you may know, a group named Black Lives Matter organized a week of awareness concerning police brutality against persons of color. During this week, an anonymous student or group of students responded to the week's efforts with a racially biased campaign. This incident highlights for us the current problematic ways race is perceived and performed at Amherst College, and has drawn the attention of the entire student body.

Per the advice of President Martin and Dean Vasquez, we are bringing our ideas to you all. Our hope is for Amherst to institute a day of programming similar to the 2012 Day of Dialogue around Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Respect. It is imperative that we act before Thanksgiving Break in order to address the current heightened racial tensions within the student body. By prolonging an institutional response, Amherst is jeopardizing the mental health of students, particularly students of color, as well as allowing the existing social divides among students to deepen.

If it is permissible, we would like a few minutes of your time this evening to express our thoughts and concerns on the matter. Briana Wiggins '15 and Cristina Rey '18 will be

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available to give you all a brief overview of our suggestions and answer any questions. Our group can be reached via Briana Wiggins '15 at [bwiggins15@amherst.edu](mailto:bwiggins15@amherst.edu). We look forward to hearing from you all very soon.

Sincerely,

Black Lives Matter

The members discussed whether the committee should meet with representatives from Black Lives Matter and asked the president for her impressions of the students' concerns. President Martin said that the students had described incidents of racism, largely in the form of "microaggressions," that have been occurring for years; they had portrayed the current atmosphere at the college as being fraught with friction. They also had explained their sense of exclusion or alienation from what they see as the dominant culture of the college. At the moment, students from many different backgrounds, including those who were raised in environments of privilege, apparently see themselves as targets of animosity, President Martin said, when reporting on feedback she had received from parents during Family Weekend. The students with whom the president met feel that there is discomfort on campus about discussing issues of race, and that students of color do not feel that Amherst's diversity has been integrated effectively and advantageously into the educational experience and intellectual life of the college. The students are interested in finding ways to build a more inclusive community at Amherst, and in involving the faculty in that effort, a goal that the president shares. President Martin said that she supports the students' call for more open and sustained conversation about the issues they are raising. The members agreed. They expressed concern, however, about there being insufficient time to plan, during the remaining weeks of this semester, an event along the lines of the 2012 Day of Dialogue. Having such an event next semester would allow time for faculty who might wish to do so to adjust their syllabi and/or to learn more about facilitating conversations about race. In the committee's view, taking the time necessary to prepare for an event of this complexity and importance would result in more fruitful discussions. Some members suggested that the college also needs time to consider whether alternative events would address the concerns of students more fruitfully. Professor Kingston asked what role the Multicultural Resource Center (MRC) had played in recent events, and what role it might be able to play in helping to facilitate dialogue going forward. Provost Uvin explained that staff members at the center have provided support to the Black Lives Matter group, as they do for all student groups that request it. The MRC will certainly play a crucial role in helping to organize future dialogues. The members agreed to meet with two or three members of Black Lives Matters at 5:30 P.M., and Associate Dean Tobin emailed the students, who accepted the invitation to meet at that time.

The members then turned to a committee nomination. The committee agreed to nominate Sean Redding to replace Hilary Moss on the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and to bring this nomination to the faculty on November 18. Dean Epstein informed the members that Martha Merrill Umphrey, Bertrand H. Snell 1894 Professor in American Government, will become the inaugural director of the new Humanities Center. A public announcement will be made soon. The dean noted that Professor Umphrey, who is currently serving as dean for the class of 2016, will leave that role when she assumes the directorship of the center. She will have a three-year term in her new position. Dean Epstein explained that, to respond to faculty interests, there will be more flexibility in terms of the programming structure and post-doctoral program than originally anticipated. The dean said that a faculty advisory board for the humanities center will be constituted to support Professor Umphrey in her work.

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Following up on concerns raised by Professor Rosbottom at the October 21 faculty meeting about the number of new hires in the area of Student Affairs and the new approach to student life, Professor Corrales asked whether there had been any follow-up discussions within the administration. He also said that he would like to make a proposal. Since there seems to be some concern among some faculty that Student Affairs might end up placing more emphasis on students who are struggling with personal issues and/or are in crisis than on helping all students to achieve academic success, Professor Corrales wondered whether the faculty members of a college committee, for example the College Council, might take on an oversight role in regard to Student Affairs and its policies. He offered as an example of a possible model the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (FCAFA) and the College Committee on Admission and Financial Aid (CCAFA). The CCAFA convenes under the chairmanship of the dean of admission and financial aid several times in each academic year and consists of the dean of the faculty, ex officio, and eight voting members: the dean of admission and financial aid, dean of admission, dean of financial aid, the chief student affairs officer (for this year and possibly in the future) and the four faculty members on the Committee on Admission and Financial Aid. President Martin, who said that she understands that a transition of personnel and systems can be unsettling, commented that faculty will be introduced to the new staff members in the Office of Student Affairs over time, and that she is confident that the new team is experienced and dedicated. She noted that the office is serving the needs of all Amherst students, helping them to reach their academic and personal potential and to take full advantage of all the college's opportunities. Professor Douglas pointed out that having faculty members join the office as class deans for three of the classes has ensured that academics remain central to the office's mission, and he noted that the new class deans (Professors Lopez, McGeoch, and Umphrey) seem to be fully integrated into the office. The other members agreed that having faculty members working in the office has been beneficial already, and that faculty seem to feel comfortable talking with colleagues about students who may need services offered through the dean's office.

Continuing with "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Courtright commented that she had just returned from a meeting of the board of the American Council of Learned Societies, during which she had spoken with a colleague from another institution about the possibility of Amherst creating ties with liberal arts colleges and universities in China. He had expressed interest in speaking with President Martin about issues surrounding human rights and political independence that come to the fore when contemplating such affiliations, among them ensuring freedom of intellectual exchange, and the related issue of free Internet access. President Martin said that she would be most interested in speaking with the colleague about these issues.

he members next discussed [a letter and motion](#) forwarded by the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) to revise the [Faculty Handbook IV., E., 1.](#), "The Scheduling of Courses," as indicated. The proposed new language is shown in bold caps.

**The Scheduling of Courses**

By Faculty vote on April 23, 1968 (amended on December 15, 1987, and again on May 3, 2011), courses may be scheduled according to the following pattern:

1. Monday-Wednesday-Friday: Fifty-minute classes may be scheduled on the hour: 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 1:00, 2:00, and 3:00. (A 9:00 class may start anytime between 8:30 and 9:00.) ~~Eighty-minute classes may be scheduled at 8:30, 12:00, and 2:00 on Monday-Wednesday, Wednesday-Friday, and Monday-Friday. (A 12:00 class may start anytime between 12:00 and~~



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~~12:30. A 2:00 class may start anytime between 2:00 and 3:00.) (Amended by the Faculty, May 3, 2011)~~—**EIGHTY-MINUTE CLASSES MAY BE SCHEDULED AT 8:30, 12:30, AND 2:00 ON MONDAY-WEDNESDAY, WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY, AND MONDAY-FRIDAY. (A 2:00 CLASS MAY START ANYTIME BETWEEN 2:00 AND 3:00.)**

The CEP had noted that, currently, eighty-minute classes that are held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday can start at 12:00 or anytime in between 12:00 and 12:30, as the current language indicates. The CEP has proposed this motion to eliminate all of those start times except for 12:30. The CEP has explained that it is proposing this motion at the request of the registrar, in order to break up the bottleneck of courses during this time. Specifically, the CEP has noted, there are courses from 12-12:50, 12-1:20, 12:30-1:50, and 1-1:50, which is currently causing scheduling problems because there are three times that overlap between 12:30 to 12:50 and between 1:00 and 1:20. As evidence of this problem, the CEP noted, a number of courses from 12-1:20 had to change times in August because there were not enough classrooms available at this time slot. Professor Kingston commented that, if all classes that currently meet at 12:00 were to move their start times to 12:30, that would not help to relieve the crunch between 12:30 and 1:20, but that he understands that the registrar hopes that eliminating the 12:00 start time would bring about some migration to other parts of the schedule. The members then voted six in favor and zero opposed on the substance of the motion, and six in favor and zero opposed on forwarding the motion to the faculty.

At 5:30 P.M., Whitney Beber '16, Christine Croasdaile '17, Cristina Rey '18, Briana Wiggins '15, representatives from Black Lives Matter, joined the meeting. The committee thanked the students for coming to share their group's views, and the students expressed gratitude to the committee for agreeing to meet with them. Ms. Croasdaile summarized the chronology of events involving the postering incident and related comments on social media and emphasized the necessity of a response from the college as soon as possible, with the goal of raising awareness about race relations on campus. Ms. Rey explained that the students favor a Speak Out as a first step in a set of sustained conversations about this issue. Continuing the conversation, Ms. Beber '16 spoke in more detail about the Speak Out, calling it a symbolic and necessary step in addressing what the students feel is a sense of discomfort that pervades the campus in regard to race and race relations. Ms. Beber suggested that the 2012 Day of Dialogue would be an effective template for the Speak Out, with some modifications. For example, the students propose having a faculty member moderate a Quaker-style meeting, during which students and faculty would have an opportunity to comment on their sense of discomfort and/or feelings of not belonging at Amherst because of their racial identity. The students explained that making use of such a device could help to avoid the creation of an accusatory atmosphere and serve as a starting point for conversation. The students shared with the members letters of support from the Departments of Black Studies;

Anthropology and Sociology; and Sexuality, Women's and Gender Studies. Throughout their presentation, the representatives from Black Lives Matters stressed their desire for faculty to participate in the event that they would like to take place. The members expressed support for the students' objectives, but emphasized the need to have more time to develop a program for a Day of Dialogue-like campus-wide event and to prepare faculty to incorporate discussions about race into their classrooms. The students stressed that there is a need for urgency and said that the issues under discussion need to be addressed because they affect the entire student body. Having an event prior to the Thanksgiving Break would be important to build on a current sense of energy and momentum, in the students' view. The committee agreed that these issues are exceptionally important and that they would support a campus-wide event to address them, but continued to express the view that the students' timeline was too compressed.

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The students thanked the members for their support, and the members thanked the students. The students left the meeting at 6:08 P.M.

The committee discussed next steps. The members reiterated the view that more time would be needed to organize the most appropriate event. The committee also recognized that no single event would be sufficient to address the problem. Among many possible responses, several members saw the value of having discussions in small groups, which would be led by facilitators, perhaps faculty, who had received training in cultural competency. Some also felt that gathering the whole community in one space before any small-group discussions, as had taken place in the 2012 Day of Dialogue, has a powerful symbolic effect. Others disagreed about the desirability of a community gathering. The members agreed that the Day of Dialogue, which had been organized quickly, had some structural drawbacks that could be overcome if sufficient time could be devoted to shaping the event under discussion and considering what strategies would be most effective. While the members agreed that the campus-wide event should be delayed until the spring semester, they felt that representatives from Black Lives Matter should be given an opportunity to share their concerns with the faculty as soon as possible. To this end, the committee asked the dean to invite representatives from Black Lives Matters to give a short presentation at the faculty meeting on November 18. The committee agreed that the students should be asked to discuss their vision for how Amherst College can move forward to foster inclusive and productive conversations around racial issues. The students should also be informed that, moving forward, the Committee of Six hopes that the students will work together with the college leadership to plan a day of dialogue or other campus-wide event that will address issues of race in the Amherst community and beyond. In order to ensure adequate preparation, the students should be informed that the committee believes that this event should be held next semester. Planning, however, should begin immediately. (The students later accepted the committee's invitation to make a presentation at the faculty meeting on November 18 and agreed that the campus-wide event should be held next semester.) Provost Uvin left the meeting. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully

submitted, Catherine

Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended November 12, 2014**

The sixth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, November 3, 2014. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under "Topics of the Day," Dean Epstein noted that student representatives from the group Black Lives Matter have accepted the Committee of Six's invitation to make a presentation at the November 18 faculty meeting for a period of a half hour. Professor C. Dole commented that, during discussions that he has had with some students since the Committee of Six's last meeting, it has been suggested that the college offer a statement of apology for a lack of attention to a persisting climate of racism on campus. The students pointed to continuing conflict, tension, and microaggressions over many years. Professor C. Dole wondered if the college is considering an immediate response to the issues raised by representatives from Black Lives Matter. He asked what is being done to address racial tensions at this moment. President Martin said that she plans to begin the process of dialogue and planning for the future by meeting on Tuesday (the next day) with a group of faculty, with whom she hopes to generate ideas about how the college might move forward. Professor Courtright said that she is sorry that the college, over many years, has not created an open enough climate for conversations about racism on campus. She expressed support for making discussions about contemporary events involving racism part of the classroom experience in the coming year. Professor C. Dole suggested that the college acknowledge that it has failed to create a discursive space for a meaningful conversation about race. President Martin responded that students are keenly interested in having faculty more involved in creating that space, in their classrooms and in other venues. She also noted that there are a number of groupings of students on campus who have strong feelings about the ways in which they, and their points of view, are treated by others. She said that she will try, with help from faculty, staff, and students, to find ways to raise awareness and to create space for discussion about racism and respect for persons on campus. Professor C. Dole commented that looking internally for guidance may not be the best approach. Some students have told him that they would like to see experts in addressing such issues invited to campus to speak about racism and to discuss ways in which the college can support and benefit more fully from the diverse community that has been assembled here. President Martin said that she would be in favor of such an approach. Professor Douglas agreed with the view that, although the college's dedication to bringing diversity to Amherst is robust, not enough is being done to address issues that have emerged as a result of the college's efforts.

Dean Epstein next raised the issue of celebrating retiring faculty members at their final faculty meeting by having a citation read about the colleague. This is a relatively new tradition, having been initiated in 2012. Dean Epstein noted that, for a number of years, citations about retiring faculty members had been read at commencement; some retiring colleagues had objected to the practice, which had then been discontinued as a result. The new practice is an attempt to find another way to honor retiring faculty. The dean said that it has recently come to her attention that some retiring faculty members would prefer not to have a citation read. The committee expressed support for honoring retiring faculty with citations, viewing this moment of ceremony as a memorable and important way of thanking and recognizing colleagues for their service over many years. If a faculty member does not want a citation read, his or her preference should be respected, it was agreed.

Conversation turned to a motion forwarded via letter from the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) that the faculty vote to revise the *Faculty Handbook*, [Section IV., B., Teaching and Advising](#), to follow 1. and to replace the current number 2., effective in the 2015-2016 academic year. See the [Committee on Educational Policy's letter](#).

**2. Teaching Evaluations of Tenured Faculty Members.** ~~Each tenured faculty member (other than those on phased retirement) evaluates his or her teaching in one course each year by means of her/his choice. Among these may be end-of-semester student evaluations, videotaping of several classes,~~

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~~observation by one or more colleagues, or retrospective evaluations by students who have taken the course. (Those holding half-time FTE appointments evaluate one course every two years.) Whatever the form(s) of evaluation, the content and results belong to the faculty member, are confidential, and any record may be destroyed by the faculty member at any time. (Voted by the Faculty, May 2007)~~

**2. Teaching Evaluations of Tenured Faculty Members** On behalf of the faculty, written evaluations will be solicited from students in each course taught by a tenured faculty member. These responses will remain anonymous. Students will not submit a response after they have seen their final grades for the course; faculty members will not see the responses until after final grades have been submitted. An automated system of response solicitation will direct students to an online evaluation form that offers a default template of questions (periodically reviewed by the CEP) that will be customizable by each member of the Faculty. All student comments will remain confidential, will be at the complete disposal of, and will be accessible only by the faculty member for whom the evaluations have been solicited.

As noted in the CEP's letter, seven years ago an Ad Hoc Committee on the Evaluation and Improvement of Teaching brought a motion to the faculty to change the college's policy on teaching evaluations for tenured faculty. The faculty approved an amended motion, now the current practice, that required senior faculty members to evaluate one course per year in any manner of their choosing. It was also agreed at the time that the faculty would assess the value of this program six years later. For this reason, the CEP began discussions of senior faculty evaluations last year and sent out a survey (in November of 2013) asking senior faculty about their evaluation practices. [The results from the survey](#) were provided to the Committee of Six after this meeting and did not inform the discussion.

Professor Marshall expressed support for the motion, noting that the process being proposed addresses pragmatic concerns that he has had in the past about the process of soliciting evaluations for tenured faculty. He said that he sees the value of going a step further and having the evaluations read by someone other than the faculty member, so that there could be a true assessment, with feedback offered. Other members said that they believe that many faculty members would oppose this approach. Professor Douglas asked what the purpose would be of having others see the evaluations. In his view, if that were to be the case, there should be some substance attached to the process—either in terms of rewards such as merit pay or a conversation addressing perceived problems with a faculty member's teaching. Otherwise the process would be hollow and without value. Professor Corrales said that, if tenured faculty members were assessed, it would be essential that the instrument used be professionalized. The current format of teaching evaluations does not meet the standard that would be needed, he said. Professor C. Dole wondered whether a teaching and learning center might provide a space for meaningful discussions about teaching that could be divorced from concerns surrounding assessment and judgment. Professor C. Dole also raised questions about "evaluation fatigue," wondering if having students spend more time filling out evaluations for tenured faculty members might reduce the already low response rate, in some cases, for untenured faculty—for whom the process is essential for reappointment and tenure. Professor Courtright noted that one strategy that is effective in addressing the problem of a low response rate is setting a policy that grades will not be provided to students who do not complete evaluations. Professor Corrales expressed concern that such a practice could be coercive and that evaluations should not be submitted under duress, but was reassured when he was informed that students would have the option of submitting a blank evaluation under the system described by Professor Courtright. Professor Kingston noted that the response rate increases if students are required to do the evaluations in class, a system that could be used for untenured faculty.

Professor Corrales wondered if the proposed process might create two different systems of evaluation, one for the tenured and another for the untenured. The dean noted that, at present, each department has its own course evaluation formats. Under the proposal, tenured faculty could customize the online form and have it mirror the one used in their department for untenured faculty. Professor C. Dole, while expressing support for having teaching evaluations for tenured faculty members, asked whether the process for evaluating teaching for untenured faculty, including the format of evaluations, is

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going to be examined. In his view, the process is flawed. He wondered whether, by requiring evaluations for tenured faculty, the problems associated with teaching evaluations would be generalized. Dean Epstein said that the proposal is a starting point. The CEP feels a sense of urgency about moving forward with a system of teaching evaluations for tenured faculty, since there has not been one for so long. She informed the members that it is her intention to include discussions of the evaluation of teaching on the committee's agenda during the spring semester. Professor Douglas commented that the proposed system is a smart way to go about this process, in his view.

The members made some small revisions (indicated in red) to the CEP's motion to enhance clarity. 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.

**Teaching Evaluations of Tenured Faculty Members** On behalf of the faculty, written evaluations will be solicited from students in each course taught by a tenured faculty member. These responses will remain anonymous. Students will not **BE ABLE TO** submit a response after they have seen their final grades for the course; faculty members will not **BE ABLE TO** see the responses until after final grades have been submitted. An automated system of response solicitation will direct students to an online evaluation form that offers a default template of questions (periodically reviewed by the CEP) that will be customizable by each member of the Faculty. All student comments will remain confidential, will be at the complete disposal of, and will be accessible only by the faculty member for whom the evaluations have been solicited.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended December 8, 2014**

The eighth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, November 17, 2014. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder. Provost Uvin was absent.

Under "Topics of the Day," President Martin reminded the committee about the emergency drill that would be held the following day from 8 A.M. until 1 P.M. Dean Epstein then informed the members that the advisory board for Amherst's new Humanities Center has been constituted. Professors Courtright, Grobe, Horton, Parham (chair), and Rogowski, and Associate Dean Sarat have agreed to serve, she noted.

Conversation turned to the November 18 faculty meeting and the members' role in regard to introducing the motions on the agenda. The dean informed the members that it is her understanding that it would be premature for the faculty to have a conversation about strategic planning at a faculty meeting on December 2. The committee discussed the schedule for faculty meetings for the remainder of the semester and agreed that the next faculty meeting should be held at the beginning of the spring semester.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Courtright encouraged the president to take an active role in the search for the next director of the Mead Art Museum. Professor Courtright praised the decision of the dean of the faculty to co-chair the search committee as an important sign of the college's commitment to the Mead, a major and previously overlooked campus resource that has over the last years become central to pedagogy on campus. She remarked further that the search for a top-notch head of the Mead, commensurate with Amherst's distinguished place in the world of higher education, would also benefit from the president's assurances that she supports the process and outcome. President Martin said that she would be happy to participate in the process, which is being led by a search committee and aided by a search firm.

Professor Kingston next distributed a list, prepared by Professor Woglom, of the staff in the Dean of Students Office in 2005 and of those in the Office of Student Affairs today. Professor Kingston explained that Professor Woglom, who is a member of the Committee on Priorities and Resources (CPR), has expressed concern about the new structure and approach within Student Affairs and the expansion of staffing in this area, as well as frustration from the perspective of faculty governance. The list, according to Professor Kingston's understanding, appears to show that staffing has expanded dramatically over time. The members noted that the size of the student body and the needs of Amherst students have changed significantly during this period. President Martin explained that the reorganization of Student Affairs was a necessity, as students and the college as a whole were at risk under the previous structure, and at the previous level of staffing. Professor C. Dole noted that some faculty members are skeptical about the argument of risk as a rationale for expanding the office. President Martin responded that the administration has not simply made a claim about risks, but has presented information about the challenges and deficiencies within this area of the college, and that some of the repercussions for students, in particular in the area of sexual assault and in Title IX compliance, are well known. It is essential, she said, that there be a level of trust that the administration was and is working in good faith to address serious concerns and to meet the needs of Amherst students. She also suggested that the Committee of Six invite Chief Financial Officer Kevin Weinman to meet with the committee and provide information about expenditures on administration and on core mission activities.

On behalf of Professor Woglom, Professor Kingston next asked the president whether Chief Student Affairs Officer Suzanne Coffey has been named to the position permanently or is still working under a two-year contract. President Martin said that no decision has been reached on this front. Professor Kingston next asked whether a national search will be conducted for the position of chief student affairs officer when the time comes to make a permanent appointment. President Martin said that a decision has not been made on this question. Continuing, Professor Kingston noted that Keeling Associates, in its [interim report](#) of April 2014, recommended that the Multicultural Center, the Queer Resource Center, the Women's and Gender Center, and services for international students, all of which are now situated within the Office of the Provost and which are student centered, should be moved

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to the Office of Student Affairs (recommendations three and six), and asked if any decision has been made about whether these recommendations will be followed. President Martin said that shifting the centers and services for international students to Student Affairs would make sense over time. Professor Corrales said that he would favor such a move.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Corrales expressed the view that anxiety about the changes within Student Affairs exists, but it seems to be diminishing. Professor Douglas agreed, while noting that the relationship between the Office of Student Affairs and faculty members and the approach of the office are still developing and may feel unfamiliar to many. It was noted that most colleagues in the Office of Student Affairs are new to the college and/or their roles and are, at times, erring on the side of caution in providing information to faculty members that may have been offered readily in the past. Some decisions in this regard may be matters of compliance with regulations outside the college's purview.

Returning briefly to the question of the expansion of staffing in the Office of Student Affairs, President Martin noted that the number of administrative staff at Amherst remains slightly lower than at peer institutions, according to data provided by the Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE). While the goal is certainly not to raise the number of administrators significantly and to reach the level of peer institutions, it is necessary to provide the support that the Amherst student body needs to thrive, she said. Professor Courtright noted that the Writing Center is a vital resource for many students, and that it appears to her, based on the experience of her students, that there is greater demand for its services than can be accommodated. Professor Douglas agreed, noting that his students have had to make appointments far in advance to arrange meetings at the Writing Center. The question of whether the Writing Center still has drop-in hours was raised. Professor Douglas also asked whether the supply of writing intensive courses adequately meets demand. At the conclusion of the discussion, it was agreed that it would be helpful to have Kevin Weinman meet with the committee to discuss the growth of the college's administrative and other staff over the past decade or so and to offer comparative data on this issue. Dean Epstein agreed to invite Mr. Weinman to an upcoming meeting of the committee. 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 December 22, 2014**

The ninth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, December 1, 2014. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under "Topics of the Day," the committee discussed briefly the response that had been received from Professor Gentzler, co-director of the Writing Center, to the members' question about the availability of "drop-in hours" at the center and whether the current demand for its services is being met. Professor Gentzler informed the dean that all students are asked to make an appointment in advance. On very rare occasions, a student will stop by without an appointment, and if an associate or director is available, that student can have a session. Professor Gentzler said that there is a lot of unmet demand. The majority of the center's appointments are booked one or two weeks in advance; students know that if they don't make an appointment well before the time that they will need one, they are unlikely to find an appointment at a time that they can make. At the same time, if a student is very lucky and diligent about checking the online scheduler for appointments, he or she might find an appointment within days, Professor Gentzler noted. Availability sometimes arises because students who book appointments in advance can find that they aren't ready to take advantage of the appointment, and they then cancel it. The center asks for twenty-four hours' notice for cancellations, but Professor Gentzler said that this policy is difficult to enforce. Whatever hours that are left unused are generally due to last-minute cancellations.

In summary, the dean noted, Professor Gentzler said that it is extremely difficult to get an appointment at the Writing Center at a time that makes the most sense for the student. The demand cannot be met, given the center's current staffing, in Professor Gentzler's view. Staff at the center have been deliberating about how best to address this issue. They are especially concerned that first-year students are effectively shut out of the Writing Center. In response, the center has instituted a two-appointment-per-week limit, but this new policy has not had an impact because the problem is so significant, according to Professor Gentzler. She noted that the center has contemplated discontinuing or severely restricting the work that it does with students on personal statements and statements of purpose for internships, fellowships, and graduate school applications. The center is reluctant to do so, however, since students have benefitted a great deal over the past few years from the advice that the Writing Center staff has given them on their writing, Professor Gentzler reported. The center's program of offering workshops in faculty classes and of offering consultations to faculty on their writing assignments have been very popular with faculty, but inevitably take the associates away from their regular appointment hours, Professor Gentzler said. In her view, all of the work that the Writing Center does is valuable, and it would be a shame if services had to be reduced in any area. At the same time, she expressed concern regarding the current situation in which students cannot get help on their writing because they can't get an appointment at the Writing Center. The best solution, in Professor Gentzler's view, is to increase the staffing at the Writing Center.

Professor Courtright expressed support for adding staffing at the Writing Center, stressing that the services of the center are vital to some first-year students, many of whom are now unable to get an appointment. Professor Douglas agreed. Dean Epstein said that she would explore that possibility of increasing staffing at the Writing Center, weighing this need against other college priorities. The dean commented that she would seek information from Mr. Lieber about whether the demand for intensive writing courses is being met and how the referral process operates, as these questions had been posed by Professor Douglas the previous week. Professor Douglas suggested that the college look into changing its practice of referring students to writing

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intensive courses. Presently academic advisors are not notified as a matter of course when an advisee has been identified as standing to benefit from a writing intensive course. Professor Douglas suggested that the dean of students communicate this information to advisors. The committee turned to personnel matters. Provost Uvin left during this portion of the meeting and returned for the discussion that followed.

Conversation turned to the topic of whether to have a day of dialogue for the college community to focus on issues surrounding race and racism at Amherst, and in society more broadly. President Martin and Dean Epstein expressed support for having the event, noting the deeply troubling experiences and concerns shared by students and by other members of the Amherst community, and the thoughtful feedback offered on the proposal by the faculty at the faculty meeting, in conversation, and through the recent email survey. The Committee of Six also supported the proposal to have a day of dialogue and discussed whether classes should be suspended and a number of potential dates on which the event might be held. It was noted that some faculty members, including a member of the Committee of Six, felt that classes should not be suspended in order to have this event. After considering the options and the pros and cons associated with each, most members agreed that the day would have the most impact if classes are suspended and that, if classes are going to be suspended, the day of dialogue should be scheduled on the least disruptive day. It was decided that having the event during the first week of classes, perhaps on January 22 or January 23, would be the least disruptive in regard to the academic schedule. It was noted that, while January 23 is a possibility, there might be complications for administrators if the day of dialogue were held on that day because of trustee meetings that have already been scheduled. Some members had concerns about student participation should the event be scheduled on Friday. President Martin said that she would see if the board's meetings could be rearranged.

In thinking about how to design the event, the members considered ways of encouraging the fullest participation by the community, particularly by students. It was noted that students would presumably not be stressed about their workloads at the start of the term. Alternatively, but less desirably, the event could be held later in March, perhaps on a Wednesday, it was agreed. It would likely be necessary to make up classes and/or labs on a Saturday, if the day of dialogue came later in the term, the members noted. In that case, it would be desirable to choose a week that would minimize disruption to athletic events. President Martin noted student interest in building in as much faculty interaction as possible during the day. The committee discussed the format of the event and considered different ideas, including holding classes in a condensed form in the afternoon as part of the day of dialogue. Under such a structure, students would be required to attend at least one of their classes, during which a discussion leader could guide conversation about a topic related to the theme of the day. This approach could encourage student participation, the members felt.

Continuing with the discussion of the day of dialogue, the committee agreed that there should be a keynote speaker who should be tasked with providing an overview of the ways in which race and racism have an impact on U.S. society, perhaps from a sociological and/or historical perspective, and offered some suggestions of possible speakers. The event, it was agreed, should also include workshops, some of which could be led by faculty who typically discuss issues of race and racism as part of their classes; cross-group conversations; and an evening capstone event. Some members noted that including a presentation by Mike Kelly, head of Archives and Special Collections, about the history of race and racism at Amherst would be desirable. Professor Kingston asked if the emphasis of the day's discussions would be primarily on race relations at Amherst, or if it would take a broader view. The members felt that the event



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should encompass both local and general issues/concerns. Dean Epstein informed the members that an advisory committee would be formed to assist in planning the day. It was agreed that the day of dialogue should be the beginning of new and more sustained efforts, including training for faculty on ways to discuss issues of race and racism. Professor Corrales praised the new workshop on unconscious bias that the provost has developed and offered for faculty and administrative search committees. Professor Douglas recommended fostering discussions that address the ways in which hate speech may test respect for free speech and the norms of civility within a community. He suggested that a series of programs for the upcoming semester should be developed and presented, perhaps in consultation with the Humanities Center, rather than focusing on the day of dialogue exclusively. He then asked about the role that the Committee of Six was to have in planning the day of dialogue. Dean Epstein said that, in addition to setting the goals for the day, the committee will be asked for input as the planning group develops the program.

The committee next considered [a letter](#) that Professor Woglom had sent to the Committee of Six that outlined his views, which he had previously asked Professor Kingston to explain to the committee, on the growth of the administration and the structure/model that has been adopted in the area of Student Affairs. The members agreed that it would be helpful to ask Chief Financial Officer Kevin Weinman to share data about how Amherst compares with other institutions in terms of its staffing of student affairs, as well as additional comparative data (perhaps from COFHE, the Council on Financing Higher Education) on the staffing of instruction versus other areas of the college. Mr. Weinman should be asked, it was agreed, to offer information on changes in practices at Amherst over time, perhaps over the past decade, that illustrate the relative growth of faculty versus administrators. Mr. Weinman should also discuss relevant budget information. Dean Epstein said that it is her understanding that the college's records about staffing are poor, in many cases, so some information that is being requested might prove challenging to provide. She agreed to share the members' questions with Mr. Weinman.

In regard to Professor Woglom's request that a small review committee of faculty be formed to review the changes in the area of Student Affairs, Professor Corrales expressed the view that, since the changes are so new, it is too early to evaluate them. He suggested that a review might take place in three years, for example. Professor Courtright agreed and commented that the faculty should try to avoid dictating the approaches that are taken in administrative realms. Professor Douglas said that, while Professor Woglom raises important questions, he agrees that the Office of Student Affairs should be given an opportunity to operate under its new structure for more time before an assessment is done. Professor Marshall commented that his relationship and interactions with the Office of Student Affairs have improved under the new model. The committee agreed that a review committee should not be formed at this time. The dean was asked to convey the committee's views to Professor Woglom, and she agreed to meet with him to do so.

Dean Epstein next shared with the members a nomination for an appointment for a John J. McCloy '16 Professorship of American Institutions and International Diplomacy. Dean Epstein explained that a department has requested that the individual be brought to Amherst as a visitor for two or three years. She asked for the committee's views on whether it would be appropriate to appoint the person as a McCloy Professor. Prior to the meeting, the dean provided the committee with the individual's CV and information about the process for appointing McCloy Professors that had been developed, in collaboration with the Committee of Six, and used since 2008. Professor Corrales asked whether it would be possible to do shorter appointments under

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the McCloy program, and maybe even have two types of appointments, one for year-long visits, and another for shorter-term visits, maybe just for several weeks, to offer workshops or lectures, rather than a semester-long course. President Martin suggested that the terms of the professorship should be examined carefully to ensure that the college is adhering to them. If the dean supports the department's request, other support could be used to bring the individual to Amherst while this issue is under consideration. It was agreed that Megan Morey, chief advancement officer, should be asked to review the terms of the McCloy Professorship, and that the administration would report back on the findings. Professor Douglas asked if a solicitation for nominees for McCloy Professors are regularly sent to departments. Dean Epstein noted that, while this has been a practice in the past, it has not been done recently. There has not been a McCloy appointment since 2010, she said, and McCloy funds are currently not being spent.

Provost Uvin briefly discussed a personnel matter involving an administrative position with the committee.

Following the meeting, the dean received a special request from the registrar regarding a degree case. A graduating senior (a member of the class of 2015E) has a serious and pressing need for documentation that his degree has been awarded, she had explained to the members via email. Since there will not be a faculty vote on degrees until the next faculty at the beginning of the spring term, a timeframe that will not meet the deadlines facing the student, the dean asked the members if the faculty should vote on this one degree case electronically. The board has already agreed to vote electronically on "E cases," when necessary, Dean Epstein informed the members. The committee agreed that the faculty should vote on this one case electronically, as long as the faculty receives the typical information about the degree candidate.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended January 6, 2015**

The tenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, December 8, 2014. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under "Topics of the Day," President Martin discussed with the members the events of the previous Sunday, when police were called to disperse a disorderly crowd of an estimated two thousand students, many from off campus, who attended the annual "Crossett Christmas" party within the "Social Quad." An emergency message had been sent electronically, in error, to all members of the Amherst community. Campus police had meant to contact students only. President Martin apologized for any inconvenience to faculty and staff who were awoken by these messages. She said that the event, and preparations for it, is now being reviewed. Once this process is completed, a decision will be made about whether Crossett Christmas, which has been problematic in the past, should be permitted in the future. President Martin noted that the college offered alternative possibilities this year, including a non-alcoholic event at the Powerhouse for Amherst students, other smaller student-only social gatherings, and late-night food offerings. Professor Marshall asked if the new dormitories that will be built to replace the "Social Dorms" are being designed in ways that will mitigate some of the problems that the current design seems to foster. President Martin said that architects are designing the new residence halls in ways that it is hoped will help to build community in positive ways.

Conversation returned to the topic of writing intensive courses. In response to the committee's inquiry about the program, Mr. Lieber reported to the dean via email that between September 2010 and May 2014, the college typically offered two intensive writing courses each semester. Each course was nominally capped at twelve students, but each section typically would overenroll and would end up averaging fourteen or fifteen students per section. Under these circumstances, not all students who were identified as needing the courses could be accommodated. This academic year, seven sections of writing intensive courses are being offered instead of four. Starting next year, there will be eight courses per year. Mr. Lieber expressed the view that eight courses will put the college in sight of meeting the full need for intensive writing courses, if not the full demand for them, since every section of all the courses tends to be overenrolled—often by quite a substantial number—during pre-registration. In his email to the dean, Mr. Lieber noted that, for the fall semester, thirty-two incoming students signed up for intensive writing courses. Many were students who had participated in the Summer Humanities and Summer Science programs, during which they began to receive writing instruction. The other students were identified on the basis of their writing SAT or ACT scores and the essays they had submitted as part of their applications to Amherst. In theory, three sections could have accommodated all of these students, but several of the fall intensive slots were already occupied either by upperclass students who needed the course but couldn't fit it in previously, or by students who had taken a previous intensive writing course but who needed additional instruction. According to Mr. Lieber, of the thirty-two students identified as needing the course at the start of the fall, twenty-four were accommodated in the fall and the other eight were guaranteed places in the spring. For enrollment in the spring courses, recommendations were solicited from all First-Year Seminar instructors for their first-year writers who seemed to need the most help, Mr. Lieber wrote. Recommendations for an additional thirty-nine students were made through this mechanism. With four sections this spring, it appears that all but a couple of these students will be accommodated (and for those who haven't been accommodated, the reason is usually scheduling conflicts). Though the situation now seems to be good, according to Mr. Lieber,

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it is also clear that there is a strong demand for these courses. Many younger students are understandably anxious about the quality of their writing and eager to improve it, but there are not nearly enough slots to meet that demand. Those teaching these courses are eager to add more of them, if additional departments can be persuaded (and could be given the resources) to offer them, according to Mr. Lieber.

Professor Douglas reiterated his view that the college should consider changing its procedures for referring students to writing intensive courses. He expressed concern that academic advisors are not notified as a matter of course when an advisee has been identified as standing to benefit from a writing intensive course and suggested that the Office of Student Affairs communicate this information to advisors. Professor Douglas wondered if the request for recommendations of students who might benefit from writing intensive courses is sent only to First-Year Seminar instructors. Sending the request to all advisors would be an improvement, in his view. Professor Marshall said that the process of placing students in these classes is better than in the past, while noting that it is difficult for an instructor to find out who a given student's advisor is, and he agreed that it would be helpful for advisors to be informed when it is recommended that one of their advisees take a writing intensive course. After reading these minutes, Mr. Lieber noted that he routinely contacts advisors when it is recommended that any of their advisees take a writing intensive course. Professor Douglas expressed the view that opportunities to do things better are being missed. He wondered whether First-Year Seminar instructors are evaluating their students' writing at the end of the semester, which should be the standard practice. Professor Douglas asked whether the committee could be informed about the number of students who choose not to take writing intensive courses after receiving recommendations that they should do so and about how many faculty members are recommending students for these courses. Dean Epstein said that she would contact Mr. Lieber about these questions.

Continuing the discussion, Professor Corrales expressed the view that the number of students being recommended through the First-Year Seminar Program is lower than what he would expect. The members agreed that it would be helpful for the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and the First-Year Seminar Committee to explore some of the issues that the committee has raised about writing intensive courses. It would also be important to involve Mr. Lieber in discussions of these questions. Professor Courtright commented that, at present, the resources available for faculty members who are addressing the needs of students with serious disabilities appear insufficient. Dean Epstein said that she encourages faculty members to bring to her attention situations in which a significant amount of their time is being devoted to help students with special needs achieve success in their classes. The dean noted that she is working with a number of faculty on an individual basis who are feeling overwhelmed by the amount of time that they need to devote to individual students to accommodate individual needs. Professor Douglas wondered if it might be helpful to explore admission data to determine if the perception that there may be a bimodal distribution of students at the college is reflected in the data. President Martin suggested that Professor Douglas speak with Ms. Fretwell, dean of admission and financial aid, about these questions. The president commented that it is her understanding that, as the college has become more diverse, the academic quality of the student body has improved overall, but that there are now varying levels of preparation among Amherst students.

In the president's view, more emphasis should be placed on providing the resources for academic support that will help all students at Amherst to thrive.

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Chief Financial Officer Kevin Weinman joined the meeting at 4:05 P.M. The members thanked him for making a presentation, which was prompted, in part, by questions about the growth of staffing at the college that had been posed by Professor Woglom in his [recent letter](#) to the committee. Mr. Weinman began his remarks by noting that the comparison information that he would provide is based on the Council on Financing Higher Education (COFHE) report titled “A Comparative Study of Non-Faculty Staffing in the COFHE Colleges.” In describing the scope of the report, he noted that because of significant differences in how the various COFHE schools approach staffing in these two departments, for purposes of the study, “all non-faculty staff” did not include coaches and staff in the area of dining services. The study is performed every three years, he explained, and the most recent survey was completed one year ago (in fall 2013). Participation in the study is premised upon protection of institution-specific information, Mr. Weinman informed the members. He said that he would share this information with the committee, but that school-specific data should not be included in the minutes of the discussion. The institutions in the COFHE peer group are Amherst, Barnard, Bates, Bowdoin, Bryn Mawr, Carleton, Colby, Davidson, Haverford, Middlebury, Mount Holyoke, Oberlin, Pomona, Smith, Swarthmore, Trinity, Vassar, Wellesley, Wesleyan, and Williams. For purposes of the discussion, COFHE universities (Brown and Dartmouth) were not included in the data offered.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Courtright noted that the schools under discussion have varying enrollments, and she wondered how enrollment differences might affect comparisons. Mr. Weinman noted that the Amherst enrollment is 1,817, and that the COFHE college median enrollment is 2,023. While Amherst’s enrollment is about 10 percent below the median, there are several much larger and less-well-funded schools in the cohort (Oberlin, Wesleyan, Vassar, and Mount Holyoke, for example). Mr. Weinman said that it is important to recognize that some “fixed” elements to staffing cannot be directly scaled to enrollment, and that “pure comparisons” on a per-student basis may not be that informative. In Mr. Weinman’s view, the assumption that the COFHE college median is a good comparative data point for Amherst is a good one. He does not feel that it is necessary to scale staffing information to level of enrollment.

Mr. Weinman reported to the committee that Amherst’s spending on administrative staff has been lean relative to its financial resources and in comparison to peer schools. While Amherst’s staffing has grown over the last decade, the rate of growth is consistent with that of other schools. This is true of both faculty and administrative (excluding coaches and dining services) growth, which grew proportionally at a rate of 12 percent. Recent hiring has increased in fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2015, but this trend is not reflected in the most recent COFHE survey, Mr. Weinman noted. He reported that hiring has been focused in the areas in which, in comparison to other schools, Amherst has the greatest deficiencies—student affairs and campus security, in particular. Mr. Weinman said that it is important to note that, to respond to the same needs and pressures, he has learned from other chief financial officers that other schools are doing more hiring in these areas as well. Despite having the second largest endowment of the COFHE colleges, Amherst’s administrative staffing has been “middle of the pack” from 2004 to 2013, Mr. Weinman said. Given Amherst’s goals and resources, some members wondered whether the college should be at the median.

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Continuing with his presentation, Mr. Weinman informed the members that, in comparison to peer colleges, a higher proportion of Amherst's non-faculty FTEs is devoted to instructional support. He noted that one out of five non-faculty FTEs is in this area. Amherst falls right in the middle of COFHE Colleges in relative spending on non-faculty to faculty salaries, according to Mr. Weinman. Amherst falls slightly below the peer group in the proportion of its total operating budget spent on non-faculty salaries. The number of instruction and support FTEs at the college has significantly exceeded COFHE colleges for years, and the current staffing in this area exceeds the COFHE median by almost 25 percent. This category of FTE includes lab techs, academic department coordinators, administrative assistants, writing center and museum staff, dean's office staff, athletics department staff (excluding coaches), and academic technology staff. In regard to instructional support FTEs as a percentage of non-faculty FTEs, Mr. Weinman informed the committee that a comparatively higher proportion of Amherst staff FTEs is here to support the academic enterprise than at most peer institutions. Amherst's library, technology and computing staff track very closely to the COFHE college median.

On the other hand, the number of Amherst FTEs in the area of student services has significantly and consistently lagged behind the mean. Ten years ago, Amherst staffing was about 35 percent less than COFHE college peers. Although hiring in this area has increased, Amherst still lags behind its peers by 15 percent. ([See information provided by Mr. Weinman.](#)) Some peers have increased staffing in this area recently (2010 through 2013), as noted in the report. In addition, at a recent meeting of chief financial officers that Mr. Weinman attended, a number of chief financial officers of these institutions indicated that hiring continues in this area at their schools. In regard to staffing in the area of alumni relations, advancement, and communications, the study reveals that the number of Amherst FTEs in this area is at or slightly above the median (during the campaign period). He noted that there is a strong track record of giving by Amherst alumni, particularly given that the college has a medium-sized development function. Turning to admission and financial aid, Mr. Weinman said that the number of Amherst FTEs is at or slightly above the median, noting that, with 8,400 applications, Amherst is at the very high end of COFHE schools (Williams has had under 7,000 applications). Amherst also has one of the highest proportions of students on financial aid.

Continuing the conversation about staffing, Mr. Weinman informed the members that, in the area of finance, Amherst's FTEs are at or slightly above the median. He noted that Amherst's model includes an investment office that supports the board's Investment Committee. In regard to campus security, the number of FTEs at Amherst is significantly and consistently below the median. Significant overtime has been incurred in recent years in this area, which led to the decision to approve three additional police officer positions in fiscal year 2015. In the facilities area (excluding the dining services area), the number of Amherst FTEs is at or slightly below the median. Central administration staffing experienced a high percentage increase on what has been a very low base. Most hiring in this area was in the provost and legal counsel area, Mr. Weinman believes. The complete range of Amherst offices included under this rubric was not clear. At the conclusion of the presentation, the members expressed their appreciation to Mr. Weinman.

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A brief discussion followed about the budget. It was noted that Amherst is heavily reliant on the endowment to support college operations, with almost half the funding for the operating budget coming from the endowment. At the same time, Mr. Weinman noted that Amherst's draw on the endowment, over a three-year average, is low—at 4.5 percent—and that the Board of Trustees takes a prudent and conservative approach when it comes to set the rate of the draw. He noted that the board has expressed concern about the inherent risk of the college's high degree of dependence on the endowment, at the same time recognizing that the strength of the endowment allows Amherst to be very generous with financial aid, which represents the biggest area of growth in regard to increased spending. This model of reliance on the endowment makes budget planning challenging, Mr. Weinman noted. The college has a large operating budget, given Amherst's size, and the cost per student is at the upper end of COFHE colleges, at \$90,000 to \$95,000. The college is paying close attention to changing patterns of philanthropy, as gifts to Amherst represent a significant source of funding for the college, the other being net tuition revenue. Mr. Weinman left the meeting at 4:55 P.M.

Professor Douglas commented that, based on the information presented, it appears that, historically, Amherst has been under-spending on staffing in a number of areas, including student affairs. Amherst certainly does not appear to be a major outlier among COFHE schools on any front in regard to staffing, the members agreed.

Conversation turned to [a proposal from the registrar, which was endorsed by the Committee on Educational Policy \(CEP\)](#) to eliminate the following language on early graduation that is included in the course catalog:

In exceptional cases, a student with at least six semesters of residence at Amherst and at least twenty-four 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 degree candidate.

It was noted that the last time that this exception was made was in 1964. The registrar feels that the current language raises students' expectations and leads to time lost considering requests for early graduation that are ultimately denied. It was noted that removing the language would require a vote of the faculty. Several members expressed the view that the current language seems fairly restrictive, and that students who interpret the current statement as being permissive are perhaps misreading the language. Furthermore, anticipating that the topic of early graduation might be raised as part of discussion surrounding strategic planning and that the possibility for an exceptional case to come forward should remain, most members felt that the language should remain in the catalog until a broader discussion of this issue can take place. Professor Kingston disagreed and expressed the view that the language should be removed if it does not represent a realistic possibility for students at this time, noting that exceptions can always be made when warranted. President Martin commented that the topic of flexibility in residency requirements has become part of a national conversation within higher education and noted that the Amherst faculty

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may well want to discuss the issue over the next few years. President Martin and Dean Epstein stressed that there are no plans to reduce the length of the Amherst education. The members then voted one in favor and five opposed on the substance of the motion to remove the early-graduation language from the catalog and one in favor and five opposed on forwarding the motion to the faculty.

The members next discussed [a letter from the CEP](#) and [a proposal](#) to collect, archive, and distribute student theses in an electronic form. This proposal is a revision of a proposal brought forward in March 2014, about which the Committee of Six had raised concerns at that time. Professor Marshall began the conversation by commenting that he sees a distinction between archiving and publishing, and he expressed some trepidation about adopting the proposal. In the sciences, he explained, a thesis typically represents collaborative work and is most often an extension of a faculty member's research. He sees problems with a student having the sole copyright. While single-authored in practice, a thesis in the sciences would more accurately be considered a co-authored work, from a publication standpoint. He noted that data on which a thesis might be based cannot be copyrighted, and that students should not be publishing the data of faculty members. Some scientific journals would not allow a faculty member to publish the data if the information has been published previously, which could be the case with theses under the proposal, Professor Marshall explained. Other members noted that it would require the signatures of both the faculty member and the thesis advisor to allow the thesis to be disseminated, so that Professor Marshall and other scientists could decide not to authorize the dissemination of all of their students' theses, if they wished. Professor Marshall said that this would be his approach, if the proposal is adopted. Professor C. Dole commented that, based on the documents provided to the committee, he does not yet see a compelling reason for making theses available electronically and has some hesitations about doing so. Professor Douglas pointed out that, in the absence of the advisor's permission, the thesis could not be shared electronically. Professor Courtright commented that the standards for thesis work would need to be raised if the expectation were that the thesis would be circulated (through publication) more broadly than is now the case. Professor Corrales agreed that some theses could be seen as reflecting badly on the advisor. He suggested that there could be a disclaimer that any errors, inaccuracies, or omissions in a thesis are the responsibility of the author, not the responsibility of the advisor. Professor Douglas noted that the consent requirement addresses this concern. He is less troubled by how the thesis might reflect on the advisor and more about the "Hillary Clinton" problem—how the thesis might at some future date be quoted out of context to the detriment of the former student. Professor C. Dole commented that, in his experience, for some students, the process of working on an honors thesis ends up being more important than the finished product, which, at times, is completed hurriedly. It was noted that, with the permission of a student, a thesis, at present, may be circulated by the library, upon request. Professors Marshall and C. Dole expressed the view that "circulation" via the web is far more extensive. Noting the complexities involved, the members agreed that it would be helpful to meet with CEP Chair Honig, Librarian of the College Bryn Geffert, and Associate General Counsel Justin Smith to hear their perspectives and to learn more about issues related to copyrights. Dean Epstein agreed to schedule a meeting on behalf of the committee during the spring semester.

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The Committee turned to personnel matters, and Provost Uvin left the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

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The eleventh meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, January 26, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under "Topics of the Day," the committee discussed plans that had been put in place earlier in the day to ensure the safety of the community during an impending snowstorm. Shortly before the committee's meeting, Jim Brassord, chief of campus operations, sent an email to students, faculty, and staff announcing that all classes would be cancelled and that college offices would be closed on January 27. The decision to take these steps was made in light of the decision by the governor of Massachusetts to declare a state of emergency and to ban all non-essential travel on roads after midnight on January 26. Dean Epstein informed the members that she had received a request from two faculty members to hold classes even though the college would be closed. The committee, the president, and the dean expressed serious concerns about holding classes when the college would be closed. It was noted that, if classes were held, staff members from the facilities department would have the extra burden of clearing entrance ways for classroom buildings during a time when they would need to focus their energies on major pathways and roads at the college. In addition, there would be safety concerns, and there could be legal ramifications. For example, if, during the time the college would be closed, a student—who was en route to class, because she or he felt an obligation to go—slipped on ice and sustained a serious injury, the college could be held responsible for this unfortunate event. The members also felt that holding class during the storm could place a burden on students who might not feel comfortable venturing out into the storm, but who might feel obligated to do so to attend class. Finally, it was pointed out that the storm would be coming during the add/drop period, and that students who might not be aware that a class was being held could be disadvantaged. The committee, the president, and the dean agreed that classes should not be held while the college would be closed. Dean Epstein thanked the members for their advice and said that she would inform the faculty members that they should not hold class the next day.

As it does at the beginning of each term, the committee set the dates to be held for possible faculty meetings. It was agreed that the following dates should be held: February 17, March 3, April 7, April 21, May 5, and May 21 (Commencement meeting). The dean also noted the regular work that the committee undertakes each spring.

The members next discussed the *Day of Dialogue on Race and Racism*, which had been held the previous Friday (January 23). While some members favored some aspects of the event over others, the committee felt that, overall, the event had been a success and praised the day's content and organization. The committee congratulated Provost Uvin for his leadership of this effort. Provost Uvin commented that he had worked closely with an advisory committee made up of students, faculty, and staff, and that this group had done a stellar job. He also noted that President Martin had selected and invited the panelists, including moderator Danielle Allen, who had made exceptional contributions both before and during the event. President Martin noted that Pat Allen, director of conferences and special events, had provided her with the following attendance information: attendance at the morning opening session and panel discussion was 1,350 people; 867 of these attendees were students (representing 51 percent of the student body); 138 were faculty (representing 63 percent of the faculty), and 186 were staff (representing 27 percent of the staff). The members said that they had been impressed by the panelists' remarks and discussion, and it was agreed that having a panel, rather than a single keynote speaker, had been an excellent choice. Provost Uvin noted that the advisory committee had suggested the panel format, which turned out to be a successful structure. Professor Corrales said that he was

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very impressed with the panel discussion and was glad that a panel was chosen instead of a keynote speaker, since the panel format provided an opportunity for multiple approaches to the topic to be heard. He also suggested that faculty might wish to invite the panelists to participate in classroom discussions in their courses via Skype.

Continuing with the report on attendance, President Martin said that the total attendance at the group discussions was 1,032 people (in fifty-five discussion groups), and she noted that 1,400 members of the community had lunch together. The attendance at the afternoon “envisioning” conversation was 500, and approximately 150 people ended the day with conversation, cider, and donuts at the Power House. Provost Uvin noted that twenty faculty members had served as facilitators. Professor Kingston asked how the representatives from Black Lives Matter who had met with the Committee of Six this fall felt about the day of dialogue. Provost Uvin said that a number of these students had informed him that they were pleased with the event. Professor Kingston asked what steps are being taken to build on the momentum generated by the day of dialogue. Professor Douglas commented that it would be appropriate and meaningful for student groups to take the initiative to continue to consider ways of moving forward and developing future programming, which should be a shared responsibility with the administration and faculty, rather than a “top-down initiative.” Provost Uvin agreed.

The provost said that plans are already under way for a series of events and workshops for the Amherst community for the next several semesters, noting that issues of race and racism should continue to be addressed now and in the future. He said that he and his colleagues would be reviewing carefully the feedback that is received from members of the community about the day of dialogue. President Martin noted that the panelists were excited by their experience at Amherst and have volunteered to assemble a reading list on topics surrounding issues of race and racism. It has been suggested that faculty members might lead reading groups using some of the panelists’ suggested materials. The president commented that events such as the day of dialogue can be helpful in raising awareness. In President Martin’s view, and in the opinion of some faculty members with whom she has spoken, the discussions that happened during the day of dialogue should be seen as a good beginning. For significant changes to occur, students need to have transformational educational experiences at Amherst. She offered as examples of such experiences courses that deepen students’ understanding of issues surrounding race and racism and opportunities to be taught by a faculty that includes scholar-teachers of diverse backgrounds. President Martin asked the members whether they feel that there is currently sufficient content on race and racism within the Amherst curriculum. It was agreed that it would be helpful to think about this question.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Douglas, agreeing with President Martin’s point, expressed the view that the college has implicitly operated under the assumption that the student body is homogeneous, and that all students arrive with the same level of preparation. This is not the case. Students come to Amherst with different skills and levels of preparation. Given the changing nature of the student body, Professor Douglas wondered whether it might be beneficial to have one course that all students would take that might have a common focus, one that would create a shared educational experience. Such a course might focus on issues of race and racism, or on tolerance and its limits, or on persons and groups—or on just about anything for the purposes of creating a common pedagogic experience. In a similar vein, he expressed the view that more attention should be given, and more resources should be provided, to enhance students’ writing skills. A required course would enable all students to have a shared experience and could accomplish these goals. With the objective of exploring additional ways of improving students’ writing, Professor Douglas suggested that having an external review of the Writing

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Center might be helpful. (Associate Dean Tobin later informed the committee that the last review of the Writing Center took place in spring 2005.) Dean Epstein said that she anticipates that one of the outgrowths of the strategic-planning effort will be a recommendation that a curriculum committee explore suggestions such as those proposed by Professor Douglas and the president, as well as other questions.

The members briefly noted a December 16, 2014, [letter to the Committee of Six from Professor Hall](#), in which he expressed the view that, as a matter of governance, the administration had erred in not seeking the faculty's approval to suspend classes in order to hold a day of dialogue. In a related matter, Dean Epstein said that the president and she had received a letter from a faculty member who had not attended the event because the faculty member feels that cancelling class to explore issues surrounding race and racism sets a bad precedent for students. In the faculty member's view, students may now come to feel that the only way that an issue of concern to them is recognized by the college as being important, and the only way that they can feel validated, is to cancel class for a community discussion. President Martin suggested it might be helpful for the faculty to discuss how to achieve a sense of proportionality in regard to issues that are raised within the community. Having such a sense would be helpful when considering how to address topics that are brought forward. Professor Corrales expressed the view that it would be best, whenever possible, to have the faculty vote on whether to suspend classes, when such a course is being considered. Having a vote gives legitimacy to the action, in his view. Professor Kingston noted that the dean had sent Professor Hall's letter to the Committee of Six on December 24. Given the time-sensitive nature of the matter, Professor Kingston expressed concern about the eight-day delay in providing the letter to the committee. He asked that in future, letters to the committee be passed along promptly. Dean Epstein, who noted that the letter had been sent during a time when the committee had not been meeting, apologized for the delay in getting the letter to the committee. She said that she would endeavor to share such letters with the Committee of Six with alacrity in the future.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Kingston suggested that a morning be set aside for community discussions during each academic year, to provide an opportunity for collective reflection without a feeling of crisis or the disruption of cancelling classes. Professor Corrales commented that he likes the idea of setting aside a regular time for community discussion, but feels that it would be best to do so every other year. Dean Epstein expressed the view that the beginning of the term, before academic work begins in earnest, seems to be an ideal time for suspending classes in order to have community discussion. Provost Uvin said that many members of the community had said that they would like to see a day of dialogue occur each year; it could be built into the calendar in such a way that no classes need to be canceled. He is supportive of this idea. President Martin suggested that building a day of dialogue into the schedule of the fall semester, when the weather would be best, could allow some events to be held outside, which could be desirable. Professor Corrales asked if the day of dialogue had been costly. President Martin said that the biggest expense associated with the event had been the cost of meals. She noted that providing meals through an outside vendor enabled staff members from Dining Services and custodians to participate in the day, which was very important. It was agreed that having members of the community eat together enhanced the day of dialogue.

President Martin next offered a brief report of the meetings of the Board of Trustees. Due to the threat of a snowstorm, trustee meetings were held on Friday, and the meeting scheduled for Saturday had been cancelled. The board had discussed the ongoing design process for the Greenway Residence Halls, including the ways in which these new buildings are being conceptualized in relation to Amherst's existing and future architecture and landscape.

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President Martin noted that the architects for the project have worked closely and collaboratively with members of the administration over the past three months to make refinements to the materials being proposed for the new dormitories. After seeing the current plans for the residence halls, the trustees expressed their support for the direction that the project is taking. While discussions about the budget are ongoing, the board has not yet set the comprehensive fee or made decisions about the budget, President Martin informed the members. She commented that the college has followed a medium tuition (in comparison to the college's peer schools), high financial-aid model, a position that has left Amherst with significantly less net tuition per student than most of its peers. President Martin noted the impact on the budget that resulted from the significant rise in financial aid allocated in fiscal year 2015 and the continuing reliance on the endowment to support the operations of the college. Amherst's financial aid policies—no packaged loans; need-blind for non-U.S. citizens and all candidates considered for early decision, regular, transfer, and wait-list admission; among the smallest student self-help expectations—make it exceptional among its peers, but these policies are very expensive, the president said. Very few institutions, including most Ivy League institutions with much higher endowments, choose to have aid policies that are this generous, and this costly.

The dean next updated the members on ongoing administrative searches. She noted that candidates for the position of director of the Mead are being identified and their CVs reviewed, with the help of a search firm. Finalists for the position of director of athletics are currently being brought to campus to meet the community. The dean noted that there were no faculty at the meeting that had been held the day before with a finalist, and she encouraged faculty members to try to attend upcoming sessions. Members of the committee noted that the times that had been scheduled for the open meetings had been inconvenient. President Martin noted that the committee that will examine the place of athletics at the college, which is being co-chaired by Shirley M. Tilghman, the former president of Princeton and an Amherst trustee, and Patrick Williamson, Edward H. Harkness Professor of Biology, have asked that another student, a woman, be appointed to the committee. The president said that she would ensure that a student is added. Professor Douglas said that he had some questions about the committee's charge and work. Dean Epstein encouraged him to write to the faculty members who are serving on the committee. Professor Kingston noted that some members of the Department of Economics had written to the committee to request that it gather and analyze data about the time commitments and conflicts faced by student-athletes.

Continuing with "Announcements," Dean Epstein informed the members that 2014-2015 represents the third year of the three-year course-release pilot for the Committee of Six. Dean Epstein said that the president and she, after much thought, have come to the conclusion that future course releases should be tied to the number of tenure cases that the committee will review. The president and the dean feel that the threshold for authorizing a course release for the committee members should be five tenure cases. The committee argued that having a course release has been extremely helpful and that the release should be continued in the future, no matter how many tenure cases there might be in a given year. Professor Douglas commented that the release allows the members time to be proactive in their work, rather than waiting for crises to occur before addressing issues. Professor Courtright said that she decided to receive administrative support, rather than a course release, while on the committee; this assistance has proven to be essential, but still did not keep her from falling behind in her teaching while on the committee. Professor Marshall commented that the course release has given him the flexibility in his schedule that is necessary for him to be able to attend Committee of Six meetings. He noted that there are constraints on when labs can be taught, which puts constraints on his

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availability. President Martin said that it would have been interesting to have the members keep a log of the time they devote to committee work, and to see if the workload is equivalent to a course. Professor Douglas said that he feels that the time has been comparable. Professor Corrales also argued in favor of continuing the release, regardless of the number of tenure cases, as he feels that the release should be given in recognition of the important, complex, and time-consuming work done by the committee. He also said that committee members neither apply for these positions nor have full control of the timing of their election, forcing them to make serious, unplanned alterations to their research agenda. Professor C. Dole expressed the view that the course release is justified. He noted the importance of the course release this past semester for providing the committee the time and flexibility to respond deliberatively (and in conversation with colleagues) about the enormously important and complex issues raised by the events surrounding Black Lives Matter. Professor C. Dole also suggested, given the workload of the committee, an alternative might be splitting the functions of the Committee of Six. For example, a separate tenure and promotion committee could be created. Divorcing the responsibilities of personnel and the work of the executive committee could allow for more sustained focus on college-wide matters, Professor C. Dole said. It was noted that this proposal has been made many times before, with the counter argument being that, under current structure of the Committee of Six, the members' experience of being immersed in personnel matters gives them a valuable perspective from which to address college-wide issues. President Martin and Dean Epstein said that they would consider the members' arguments and think further about whether to continue giving course releases to members of the Committee of Six.

President Martin next reported back on the advancement office's research on the terms of the John J. McCloy '16 Professorship of American Institutions and International Diplomacy. The president said that she has been advised that the terms allow for a great deal of flexibility when making these presidential appointments, and that the vetting process that was designed in collaboration with a past Committee of Six is within the guidelines established when the endowment was created. Dean Epstein noted that there will be a McCloy Professor (Franklin S. Odo in the Department of American Studies) during the next academic year, but that there is sufficient funding to bring additional McCloy Professors to the college. There has not been a McCloy appointment since 2010, she noted. The dean informed the members of her intention to solicit nominees for the professorship from the faculty this spring.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Marshall asked for clarification about a request that had been sent to chairs of academic departments by Walt Schaeffler, director of treasury operations and analysis, and Ashley Johnson, financial analyst. Dean Epstein said that it is her understanding that the request is a part of the college's new capital budget process. Capital expenses fall outside the regular operating budget, encompassing, for example, facilities and the renovation of them, IT systems projects, and equipment above certain costs. While the budget process for larger projects has historically been rigorous and consistent at the college, the dean noted, the process used to assess requests for smaller and medium-sized projects has, over the years, been more ad hoc and has sometimes occurred without weighing needs, goals, and available funds in a comprehensive way. With the new process, the dean said, project requests will be tied more closely to college priorities and will be evaluated and prioritized with other requests in mind, and funding sources will be identified. It is expected that the new process should enhance transparency and consistency and will help determine more effectively which capital projects/expenditures should be undertaken. It is expected that the majority of capital budget items will arise out of the facilities and IT departments. Some academic departments will have no capital requests. Professor Marshall asked if departmental endowed funds could still be

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used to purchase scientific instruments, without an additional layer of budgetary approval. President Martin said that such funds should still be used for this purpose. Dean Epstein said that the approval for using departmental funds in this way should still go through her office, but that she would check to be sure.

Continuing with “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Douglas noted that Mr. Lieber had contacted him about a statement in the Committee of Six minutes of December 8, 2014. In those minutes, it is noted that Professor Douglas expressed concern that academic advisors are not notified as a matter of course when an advisee has been identified as standing to benefit from a writing intensive course and had suggested that the Office of Student Affairs communicate this information to advisors. Mr. Lieber noted that he, in fact, routinely contacts advisors when it is recommended that any of their advisees take a writing intensive course. Associate Dean Tobin said that she would insert this information into the minutes of December 8, 2014, as a correction. The dean next discussed some nominations for faculty committees with the members.

Discussion turned to a [recommendation](#) and [proposal](#) from the College Council to revise the calendar for the 2015-2016 academic year. The 2015-2016 calendar was approved by the Amherst faculty in 2011, at a time when the University of Massachusetts had made the unilateral decision to begin its semester early, and when the other Five-College schools were being encouraged to start their semesters early to be in alignment with the university. Smith College later decided to reinstate a later starting date. As the letter notes, this fall, the registrar asked the council to re-examine the previously voted calendars (spring semester calendars had already been approved through 2017-2018) to make adjustments. The proposed calendar, the council noted, was developed in response to faculty requests. The Wednesday following the first day of classes in the fall has been “turned back” into a Wednesday to avoid the problem of having the first day of class meet at the end of the add/drop period for Wednesday-only seminars, and the missing Monday has been moved to the Wednesday after fall break. The council noted that, in response to [a request from the Science Faculty Steering Committee](#), the proposal includes a three-week Interterm and unbroken weeks in the spring semester. Creating a three-week Interterm would mean that the start date for Amherst’s spring term would need to be moved from the Thursday following Martin Luther King Day to the Monday following.

Some members expressed concern over the impact the adoption of the proposed calendar could have on Amherst students who wish to take Five-College classes and, potentially, on Five-College students who wish to take courses at Amherst. Some members wondered whether there are Amherst departments and programs, Theater and Dance and Architectural Studies came to mind, that might depend heavily on Five-College cooperation and enrollments and that might be affected by the proposal, if it results in Five-College students being disadvantaged in any way. Professor Corrales expressed support for the new calendar, but wondered whether the proposed calendar would make it more difficult for Amherst students to take Five-College courses, as they would need to return to campus early. Dean Epstein noted that Amherst students already return early to take UMass classes. Professor Douglas wondered if having UMass begin a week before Amherst might create an “import” problem. There might also be a “chilling effect” among Five-College students who want to enroll in Amherst courses if the courses begin a full week after their home institutions’ spring semester had begun. Since these students could then be bumped from an Amherst course, they might be left with insufficient courses, Professor Douglas said, leading them to be reluctant to assume that risk. Professor Marshall said that he would anticipate that students would be displeased by a three-day reading period, two days of which would be a

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Saturday and Sunday. Professor Kingston said that he would be in favor of bringing the calendar proposal to the faculty for discussion and a vote. Other members felt that they would like more data to inform their consideration of this issue. The committee asked the dean to gather comparative calendar data for the Five-College institutions, as well as information on Five-College import/export enrollments. She said that she would do so, and it was agreed that the members would return to a discussion of the calendar at their next meeting. The dean, who said that she favors the proposed calendar, reminded the members that a decision would have to be made very soon about whether to retain the previously voted calendar or to bring the new proposal for 2015-2016 to the faculty for a vote.

Conversation turned to a [recommendation](#) and [proposal](#), forwarded to the committee by the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and the registrar, to launch a pilot program that would have as its goal reducing the number of schedule changes that occur during the add/drop period and guaranteeing registration for students prior to the add/drop period. The pilot would create a second round of registration after pre-registration, after which students remaining on course rosters would be guaranteed enrollment as long as they attended the first class during the add/drop period. Professor Courtright expressed support for bringing the proposal to the faculty, noting that the goal of improving what is now a flawed registration system is a worthy one. Professor Corrales said that, while he likes the principles on which the proposal has been built, he finds the procedures that are being brought forward to be too complicated and too structured, and the guidelines to be too strict. Professor Marshall commented that he worries that the pilot will place more burdens on faculty. He noted that, when the college moved to online registration, advising demands expanded from one week to two weeks. Under the pilot, he would be concerned that advising responsibilities would be extended over four weeks. Professor Kingston said that he does not feel that the proposed system would be workable. He noted that he often needs to evaluate grades from the previous semester for some related courses before deciding which students he will cut from capped courses. Under the proposed system, he said that he would have to guarantee places in his courses to students before knowing what their performance had been in other relevant courses. Professor Douglas, who sees benefits to the proposal, suggested that, if Professor Kingston wanted to require as a prerequisite for a course the attainment of a certain grade in a previous course, this could still be done. If a student were guaranteed a spot in a class before the grade was known in an earlier class, Professor Kingston could cut the student from the class later, if it turned out that the student did not meet the prerequisite because he or she had not attained the necessary grade. Dean Epstein said that she supports the pilot's goals and noted that it is very problematic for students when faculty members wait until very late in the add/drop period to decide which students will remain in their classes. For students who are cut, it can be a real struggle to find a replacement course or courses. Another benefit to the proposal, in the dean's view, is the possibility that students will have more time in which to consult their advisors. The members agreed to invite Professor Honig and Ms. Kilventon to a future Committee of Six meeting to discuss the proposal further.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended February 13, 2015**

The twelfth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, January 26, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin (via speaker phone); and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

At the beginning of the meeting, the members were joined by Professor Honig, chair of the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), and Ms. Kilventon, the registrar (who participated via speaker phone), to discuss the CEP's proposal ([proposal](#) and [letter from the CEP](#)) to launch a pilot program that would have as its goal reducing the number of schedule changes that occur during the add/drop period and guaranteeing registration for students prior to the add/drop period. The pilot would create a second round of registration after pre-registration, after which students remaining on course rosters would be guaranteed enrollment as long as they attended the first class during the add/drop period.

Professor Kingston began the conversation by reiterating his concern about a feature of the proposal—that students who remain on course rosters after the second round of registration would be guaranteed enrollment in a capped course, as long as they attended the first class. Professor Honig said that the proposal has been developed to address the problem of faculty members whose courses are overenrolled after pre-registration waiting to cut students until the add/drop period. The result of this widespread practice is that students have to scramble to find other courses after classes have started, Professor Honig noted. The proposal is designed to reduce the chaos that ensues during the add/drop period. This would be done by moving portions of the process to the previous semester, when the potential impact on students' educational experience is less because they would not miss class time while sorting out their schedules. Professor Kingston said that while he supports the idea of allowing multiple rounds of pre-registration to minimize disruption to students' schedules during add-drop, he feels that faculty should retain some flexibility and control of enrollment after preregistration. For example, he often finds it helpful to see the semester's grades for related or prerequisite courses before making final decisions about which students should be cut from a capped course. The constraints on faculty introduced by the proposed system would remove this flexibility, effectively forcing him to make less informed enrollment decisions earlier in the process.

Professor C. Dole asked about the extent of the problem—how many capped courses are over enrolled, for example? Ms. Kilventon pointed out that one-fourth of Amherst students are cut from one or more classes each semester. She noted the “domino effect” of such cuts and the scrambling to register for other courses that ensues during the add/drop period. Professor C. Dole suggested that part of the problem could be addressed if faculty members were simply encouraged to make some cuts at the end of pre-registration, which would allow these students to be better prepared for navigating the add/drop period. Professor Honig stressed the flexibility that had been built into the proposal. He pointed out that students who are “guaranteed” a place in a class during pre-registration are only guaranteed a place if they attend the first meeting of the class. Similarly, if they didn't meet a grade requirement or satisfy other prerequisites that have been established, they can be cut from the class and forfeit their guaranteed spot.

Continuing, Professor Honig stressed that no registration system is perfect, and that the advantages and disadvantages must be weighed. He suggested that, under the proposal, if a faculty member wanted to find out whether a student would be a good fit for a class in advance of making the decision about whether to keep him or her on the roster, the professor could email that student's teachers during the semester to get a “read” on the student's readiness and ability. Professor Douglas wondered whether the proposal, the goal of which is to avoid chaos during the add/drop period, might inadvertently create fresh instability. He noted, for example, that, if a

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faculty member has a cap at forty and guarantees forty students spots during preregistration, and only thirty students show up on the first day of class, a class that would have been “closed” would need to be reopened. Professor Courtright commented that, in her experience, if she cuts students at the cap, some students will not show up to class, and the cap may not be met. For this reason, in over-enrolled classes, she cuts enough students to reach a figure slightly above the cap. Professor Honig said that, under the proposal, it would be possible to “save space” for students, and that cutting to the cap would not be required.

Professor Douglas wondered whether the problems surrounding over-enrollment for capped courses are limited to a small number of courses—meaning that the problem is a concentrated one—or whether the problem is evenly distributed across the curriculum. Ms. Kilventon responded that students often choose to pre-register for courses that have caps as a strategy to get in, with a result being that enrollments are inflated across the board for courses with caps. The effect of having so many capped courses with inflated numbers is that students end up having to make a lot of changes to their schedules during the add/drop period, when many faculty members make cuts. She noted that, in fact, three-fourths of Amherst students make schedule changes during the add/drop period.

Professor Douglas wondered whether a solution might be to change the advising culture. He said that he encourages his advisees to “carry” six courses during the add/drop period, that is to attend the class meetings for these courses until the student’s schedule is finalized. In this way, if they have to drop a course, they won’t be behind. Some students carry as many as ten courses in this manner, it was noted. Professor Honig said that having a student try to keep up with this many courses, even for a brief time, is a lot to ask. Dean Epstein expressed support for the pre-registration proposal, reiterating her view that it is very problematic for students when faculty members wait until late into the add/drop period to decide which students will remain in their classes. For students who are cut, it can be a real challenge to find a replacement course or courses. Another benefit to the proposal, in the dean’s view, is the possibility that students will have more time in which to consult their advisors.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Douglas suggested that an alternative to the proposal might be to have faculty members make decisions about cuts immediately after the first meeting of a class. Ms. Kilventon noted that some courses do not meet until the end of the add/drop period, which would be problematic. Professor Douglas commented that the problem would presumably be limited to a small number of seminars. Professor Corrales said that he likes the current system and expressed support for having a teaching environment in which students are able to “shop” for courses. He sees value in that experience and in permitting students not to make commitments during pre-registration. As a matter of balance, he feels that faculty should be given flexibility in regard to the make-up of their classes. It seems that, under the proposal, there is a degree of asymmetry, as students would be able to continue to change their courses, but faculty would be “stuck” with decisions regarding the make-up of their classes that they had made during the second round of pre-registration.

President Martin asked, somewhat facetiously, about the rationale for having a pre-registration period, considering that the practice seems to result in some level of dissatisfaction and/or resentment. Professor Kingston said that it is his understanding that the period allows the registrar’s office to get a sense of how classrooms should be allocated, based on predicted enrollments. Professor Corrales said that having pre-registration offers faculty a sense of the make-up and size of a class and can help them gauge how to prepare. Often the information gained after pre-registration is not very accurate, but it still can help. Professor C. Dole said that, when a student pre-registers for a course, he or she demonstrates interest. While it may not

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guarantee a spot, it certainly gives the student an advantage, if cuts become necessary. Professor Marshall said that these over-enrollments result from caps not being enforced during pre-registration. This is a necessary consequence of avoiding a “first-come, first-serve” policy during pre-registration, a situation that was rectified by policy changes recommended by the CEP and approved by the faculty in recent years. Professor Marshall said that he likes aspects of the proposal, in particular the possibility of knowing lab section enrollments before the semester starts. At present, because of the volume of class changes that occur during the add/drop period, changes to lab sections have to be made frequently to address conflicts in students’ (evolving) course schedules. Professor Corrales said that he too likes aspects of the proposal, particularly the opportunity to settle registration issues sooner, rather than later.

Professor Honig noted that the proposal offers more benefits to students than to faculty, and purposefully so. He expressed the view that students should have more flexibility than faculty when it comes to course enrollment. They should be given every chance to take the classes that they most want to take. In his view, it should matter less to faculty which students take their classes. Professor Kingston reiterated that he would favor having multiple rounds of registration, and he does not understand why there is a need to restrict pre-registration to artificially tight time windows. He continues to be concerned, however, about being constrained to guarantee students spots in his capped courses before he has the information he needs to make informed decisions about whom to keep and whom to cut. If the proposal is implemented, it would succeed in its goal of making him cut more students earlier on, but the decisions would be less informed than under the current system. In his view, the proposal disadvantages faculty who draw large numbers of students to their classes.

Professor Marshall said that he favors tight windows of registration as a way of setting parameters and offering periods where there is some respite from course changes, and from the duties related to advising that result from them. Professor Douglas said that, while he sees the problems associated with waiting until the end of the add/drop period to finalize courses, he thinks that finalizing the make-up of classes after the first meeting offers advantages and preserves flexibility, but would avoid the problem of students scrambling to find a new course after being dropped at the end of add-drop. Professor Marshall wondered if finalizing the make-up of classes might best be done just before the first day of classes. Professor Douglas said that he would prefer doing so after the first class, since one has a better sense of students after meeting them. Professor Courtright expressed the view that there would still be upheaval after students who were cut from classes scurried to find replacements. Professor Marshall commented that he imagines that, if the proposal were to be implemented, more students who pre-register would attend the first meeting of classes. He also likes the idea that there would be a date certain by which students would be cut from classes, so that they would know if they are in their preferred classes or not.

Continuing the conversation, Professor C. Dole said that he is supportive of the principles that underlie the proposal, but continues to feel that a second round of registration would create new complexities that undermine the potential benefit of the proposed system. In his view, creating some pressure on faculty to do some cutting of students at the end of pre-registration would help to address the problems identified in the proposal. Professor Honig said that the second pre-registration period could function much like the add/drop period. Professor Douglas asked about the impact that implementing the proposal would have on Five-College students. Professor Honig said that Five-College students would not be guaranteed places in capped courses during pre-registration, just as they are not guaranteed places now. Five-College students would find out if they have gotten into a course during add/drop and not in advance of

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the first class. Professor C. Dole said that the proposal seems to diminish the rights of Five-College students relative to Amherst students.

At the conclusion of the conversation about the pre-registration proposal, Bryn Geffert, librarian of the college, and Justin Smith, associate general counsel, joined the meeting for a discussion of the [CEP's proposal](#) and its [accompanying letter](#) to collect, archive, and distribute student theses in an electronic form. Much of the discussion focused on whether theses would be "published" under the proposal, or whether the intention is simply to make students' academic work available more broadly. Professor C. Dole asked what the motivation is for wanting to distribute theses more broadly. Mr. Geffert noted the following reasons: some students have asked that their theses be collected and archived electronically; faculty members in some departments have also made these requests; hard-copy versions of theses are, more and more, becoming pared down versions of electronic theses; and there is a desire by some to share academic work done at Amherst with the outside world.

Professor Marshall said that he sees no difficulties with the idea of having an electronic archive. He noted, as he had during the committee's previous discussion of the proposal, that in the sciences, a thesis typically represents collaborative work and is most often an extension of a faculty member's research. He appreciates the difference between data and ideas, he said, while noting that, since data on which a thesis might be based cannot be copyrighted, students should not be publishing, under their name only, the data obtained in collaboration with faculty members and other students. While single-authored in practice, a thesis in the sciences would more accurately be considered a co-authored work, from a publication standpoint. Some scientific journals would not allow a faculty member to publish the data if the information has been published previously, which could be the case with theses under the proposal, Professor Marshall explained. He also noted that granting agencies are becoming more conservative about allocating funds, unless it is clear that data are handled properly prior to publication. Data must be peer reviewed before they are published, for example; in Professor Marshall's view, having theses (which may contain data from a faculty member's lab) reviewed carefully by faculty members does not constitute peer review. Professor Honig noted that, under the proposal, it would require the signatures of both the faculty member and the thesis advisor to allow the thesis to be disseminated electronically, so that Professor Marshall and other scientists could decide not to authorize the dissemination of all of their students' theses, if they wished. Professor Marshall said that, if the proposal were implemented, he would likely need to inform all students that they could not work in his lab unless they agreed that their theses would not be distributed electronically. Professor Honig noted that the proposal only addresses how the library will distribute theses. As it stands now, Mr. Geffert said, the library restricts access to theses only when students instruct the library to do so. As the author or co-author of a thesis, the student retains copyright and may disseminate the thesis in any manner that he or she chooses. This proposal does not interfere with those rights. It is hoped that, under the proposal, advisors and advisees would be encouraged to discuss, before beginning thesis work, how each will (or whether each will) disseminate the thesis following its completion.

Professor Douglas asked whether, under the proposal, a faculty member could revoke permission given to the library to distribute a thesis electronically after giving the authorization to do so. Mr. Geffert noted that item III.B.3ii provides that the "restriction may be modified at any point with the consent of both the advisor and the student. If either party cannot be contacted, the original agreement will stand." Professor Honig said there was a strong feeling that the faculty member should not have full control, as he or she would if allowed to change the agreement without the student's permission. Reading from the CEP's letter of recommendation,

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Professor Honig noted that the CEP decided not to have “an optional student waiver of his/her right to be consulted on future changes of a thesis’s accessibility status (so that a faculty advisor would not need to track down a graduate who may be difficult to contact years after the student has left the College).” Professor Honig commented that the CEP felt that a student might feel pressure to sign such a waiver. See [the proposal](#) for the full information about the reasons provided for the waiver decision.

Continuing, Professor C. Dole expressed some concern that, as a thesis advisor, he can imagine that he would need to change his approach to thesis advising if theses were to be disseminated to the world electronically. Because of theses’ potential impact on public discourse, he wondered if the thesis process might need to resemble more closely the peer review process of scholarly publications. This would mean that the thesis committee as a whole might need to take a more active and earlier role in reviewing individual theses, which would change the already short timeline of the thesis process. At the same time, Professor C. Dole said that he does not like the idea of establishing a “blanket refusal” to allow his students’ theses to be made available electronically through the library.

President Martin noted that anyone could contact the library now and ask to have a thesis shared. Within academia, at least, it would be known that the library would circulate student theses. Mr. Geffert noted that Amherst theses are already cataloged in WorldCat.org, the world’s largest library catalog, and that requests for copies of theses frequently come from users of WorldCat. Professor C. Dole said it would be a different order of magnitude to be able to download theses through the library rather than having them circulated in hard copy. Professor Honig asked what the concern would be and what Professor C. Dole is worried about. Professor Dole said that he worries that theses that might not meet high standards would be widely disseminated and, in some cases, might end up contributing to public discourse. He expressed the view that having a thesis stored in an Amherst electronic repository would give a thesis greater credibility. Professor Kingston asked whether it was important that there be a single repository and wondered whether another approach might be to post theses on departmental sites, to which the library might link. He noted that his department, economics, posts all student theses on the department webpage. Mr. Geffert noted that this proposal permits a faculty member to direct the library to embargo access to a student thesis. Some members noted that some departments currently make electronic versions of theses available via a department website or repository, without contacting the thesis student to obtain permission. Mr. Smith commented that FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) regulations would require redaction of the thesis student’s name and any other identifying information (although posting a redacted thesis without the student’s permission would nonetheless risk running afoul of copyright law). Some members expressed concern that departments’ willingness to post theses could vary, so that theses would be treated in different ways.

Professor Kingston noted that the college has agreed to have an open-access policy and asked Mr. Geffert about the status of the open access repository. Mr. Geffert said that IT has just completed making the repository live. Professor Courtright noted that there is a distinction between publishing peer-reviewed scholarly work and making the theses widely available. As long as the college does not use the inaccurate term “publish” to characterize the posting of theses, she has come to feel comfortable with the idea of having the library disseminate theses electronically, particularly once she learned that theses are listed in WorldCat. The members agreed that, while theses are academic work, they are not scholarship and should not be viewed as such. The language of how the work is described was seen as important. Other members

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agreed that, as long as distributing the theses is not considered publishing scholarship, they would be comfortable having theses disseminated electronically. Mr. Geffert noted that, while theses lack every major marker of published scholarship, the information they offer may be useful to someone doing work in a field. This would be an argument for sharing theses electronically. Professor Corrales asked the expectations around crediting students in a faculty member's own publications when a faculty member and a student develop a data set together, and the student uses the data set for a thesis, which may be viewed as preliminary work. The faculty member may not yet have made use of the data set, but would want to in the future. It was agreed that, in such a circumstance, the student should be credited in the faculty member's future publications that make use of the data set. The dean thanked Mr. Geffert, Professor Honig, Ms. Kilventon, and Mr. Smith for attending the meeting, and the visitors left the meeting at 4:30 P.M.

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

That the faculty vote to endorse the Committee on Educational Policy's recommendation that theses be collected, archived, and distributed in an electronic form, as outlined in the committee's proposal

Conversation turned to the [pre-registration proposal](#). Professor C. Dole said that he still feels that the proposed process is unnecessarily complex. He wondered what registration systems might be in use at peer schools and suggested that information be gathered about these systems. Dean Epstein noted that Amherst gives the faculty an unusual amount of flexibility within the registration process in regard to choosing the students who will make up their classes, so it might be a challenge to compare systems. Professor Kingston noted that he goes to great pains to make cuts in as humane and informed a manner as he can. The proposal, with its requirement that students who remain on the roster of an over-enrolled class must be guaranteed a spot in the class, will have the effect of forcing him to take a more draconian and arbitrary approach to cutting students. Professor Douglas advocated sending the proposal back to the CEP for further discussion and revision. Professor C. Dole expressed the view that a simpler approach to the identified problems would be to ask faculty to make cuts in their over-enrolled classes during pre-registration, right away. Professor Kingston agreed that allowing faculty to cut students early so that they can find alternative classes during a second round of preregistration would solve much of the problem, and he supports this part of the proposal. However, he feels that depriving faculty of any flexibility after preregistration goes too far. In effect, because the proposal misdiagnoses the problem as one of faculty being unwilling to drop students until the end of add-drop, it offers the wrong remedy, using the "guaranteeing" provision as a "stick" to induce them to drop students early. Professor C. Dole noted that adopting the proposal would represent a substantial change, and it seems as though there should be more opportunities for discussion before moving forward with bringing the proposal to the faculty. He suggested having open meetings, for example. Professor Courtright said that the college should value the large amount of time the CEP has put into this proposal already and instead have a discussion on the faculty floor to get a sense of the faculty's views, if not immediately resulting in a vote. She subsequently agreed with Professor Douglas, who suggested that the CEP could bring forth a variety of measures in a staged fashion rather than hold a free-form discussion in order to yield concrete results. Professor Douglas continued to advocate for the idea of asking faculty members to make cuts after the first meeting of a class.

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The members agreed that the CEP should be asked to explore other options for pre-registration systems.

The committee turned briefly to a committee nomination. In a related matter, the dean informed the members that President Martin and she had taken the members' arguments into account and have decided that course releases for the Committee of Six should continue, and need not be tied to the number of tenure cases. Since Committee of Six members will have a reduced load during the time that they are serving, the dean suggested that the informal practice of protecting Committee of Six members from committee service (other than from service on the Committee of Six itself) for a period of time after their Committee of Six term ends should not continue.

Conversation turned to the college calendar. Since the last meeting, it had come to the dean's attention that there are aspects of the College Council's calendar proposal (see also the [College's Council's letter](#) about [the proposal](#)) that are deeply problematic. The calendar approved previously for 2015-2016 also suffers from these flaws. The calendars do not have thirteen weeks of classes in the fall and have only four days of exams, when 4.5 days are needed. These problems, which have arisen because Labor Day falls late, are serious and need to be addressed, Dean Epstein said. She noted there are no problems with the College Council's proposal for the spring 2016 calendar, which includes a full three weeks of Interterm. Those with whom she has consulted from Five Colleges, Inc. do not appear to have concerns about Amherst changing its calendar so as to have a three-week Interterm, [as requested by the Science Faculty Steering Committee](#).

The dean outlined potential ways of solving the issues around the calendar. To have a full thirteen weeks of classes, she suggested two options. There could be a shorter fall break (just the Monday, rather than Monday and Tuesday), [a calendar adopted in 2009](#) when Labor Day fell late. Taking this approach would mean that classes would end on Tuesday, December 15. A Monday class schedule would need to be followed on a Tuesday in the fall, (presumably the Tuesday after fall break). Another way of solving the problem would be to hold classes on the Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week. In that case, there could be a full fall break, and classes would end on Monday, December 14.

The members agreed that having classes on the Tuesday after fall break, following a Monday class schedule on that day, appears to be the best way to ensure thirteen weeks of class. This approach may need to be adopted whenever Labor Day falls late, it was noted. The dean then discussed several options around the reading period/exam period, all of which revolve around whether or not exams would be held on Sunday (which has been done in the past). Dean Epstein noted that there could be a two-and-a-half-day reading period, beginning exams on Friday afternoon, and running exams through Tuesday, December 22 (this would involve Sunday exams). Another option would be to have a two-day reading period, and to begin exams on Friday. Exams could run Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and half of Tuesday, or exams would not be held on Sunday, but would go through half of Wednesday (December 23). Another idea would be to have a three-day reading period (Wednesday through Friday), and to begin exams on Saturday, and run exams through half of Wednesday (this approach involves Sunday exams). Continuing, she noted that if there are particular objections to Sunday-morning exams, there could be a half day of exams on Sunday (using the afternoon slot), and exams could run through half of Wednesday.

After discussion and after noting that flexibility needs to be offered around Sunday exams if members of the community have a religious objection, the committee agreed to bring the following calendar proposal (appended via link) to the faculty:

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- To have a full thirteen weeks of classes in the fall, the committee would recommend a shorter fall break, proposing that the break be for Monday only (October 12), as was done in 2009, when Labor Day also fell late. A Monday class schedule would be followed on the Tuesday (October 13) after the fall break.
- Classes would end on Tuesday, December 15. Reading period would run from Wednesday, December 16, to Friday, December 18, at 2 P.M. Exams would be held Friday afternoon, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday.
- The committee would forward the College Council's proposal for the spring calendar for 2015-2016 and endorsed the proposal that Interterm be three full weeks.
- Under the proposal, Interterm would run from January 4 to January 22. The last day of classes would be Friday, May 6. The reading period would be Saturday, May 7, through Monday, May 9, and the exam period would be Tuesday, May 10 through Saturday, May 14 at noon.
- To accomplish the three-week Interterm, the start date for spring term would be moved from the Thursday following Martin Luther King Day to the Monday (January 25) following the holiday. This schedule is in keeping with the Five-College agreement regarding the development of the calendar. In spring 2016, Smith will begin on Monday, January 25; Hampshire will begin on Wednesday, January 20; Mount Holyoke will begin on Tuesday, January 19; and UMass will begin on Tuesday, January 19.

Professor Douglas asked about the impact of adopting the proposed calendar on Five-College students. The committee had been provided with import and export enrollment data prior to the meeting, and it was agreed that the most significant impact of the new calendar appears to be that Amherst students taking courses at the other schools would need to return early for the spring term. The dean noted that when Smith adopted a similar calendar, moving out of alignment after UMass changed its calendar, no significant issues, import enrollments or otherwise, emerged to her knowledge. The dean noted that the Five Colleges already provide funding for additional bus service during the final week of the spring term and would continue to do so. The members noted that Amherst students' enrollments in UMass courses have gone up in recent years. There was some suspicion that Amherst students might be choosing to take a limited number of courses at the university that might provide a significantly lower level of challenge than an Amherst course would. The committee, the president, and the dean expressed some concern, and it was agreed that the registrar should be asked to gather information that would shed light on this situation. The members then voted six in favor and zero opposed on the substance of the following motion and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the motion to the faculty.

That the faculty vote to replace the previously approved calendar for the academic year 2015-2016 with the calendar proposed by the Committee of Six

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The dean informed the members that Professor Martini has agreed to serve on the Committee on Priorities and Resources (CPR); Professor Sweeney has agreed to serve on the Faculty Research Awards Committee (FRAP); Professor Schneider has agreed to serve on the Faculty Lecture Committee; and Professor Schmalzbauer has agreed to serve on the Fellowships Committee. Dean Epstein also informed the committee that David Jones, assistant professor of geology, would deliver this year's Max and Etta Lazerowitz Lecture. His talk is titled "Looking Back from the Anthropocene: Geological Perspectives on Climate Change." The Lazerowitz Lecturer, a member of the Amherst Faculty below the rank of full professor, is appointed annually, she noted.

The committee next discussed [a proposal](#) (along with [the CEP's letter of recommendation](#), [a letter from Professor Clotfelter](#), and [draft catalog text](#)) forwarded by the CEP, that the college participate in the Five-College Coastal and Marine Science (FCCMS) Certificate. Professor Courtright said that she supports participating in the certificate and was pleased that there is a system proposed that would prevent undue burdens being placed on tenure-track faculty members involved in the certificate when tenured faculty are on leave. Professor Marshall, while expressing support for the proposal, also noted that he has some concern about the proliferation of Five-College certificates and the possible over-emphasis on credentialing that this trend represents. He fears that the certificates result in narrowing students' education, rather than broadening it. Dean Epstein said that the Five-College deans have plans to review the certificates to determine whether all of them continue to be viable.

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

That the faculty vote to endorse the proposal that Amherst College participate in the Five-College Certificate in Coastal and Marine Sciences (FCCMS)

The committee reviewed a draft faculty meeting agenda, and later voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward it to the faculty.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," noting the recent weather challenges, Professor Courtright asked if the college would consider investigating electronic systems that would allow faculty to hold classes from locations off campus during inclement weather. She said that she is aware that Harvard has a system that enables its faculty to offer classes online to two or three hundred students using technology, under similar circumstances. The dean said that she would pursue research on this question through IT and report back. In a similar vein, Dean Epstein noted that Amherst is the only one of the five colleges that does not cancel classes automatically when the college closes. When bad weather is predicted and there is a decision made to close the college, Jim Brassord, chief of campus operations, must make a judgment that the predicted weather event can be managed to ensure safety—i.e., that roads and pathways on campus can be cleared by staff and that winds will not pose a serious threat. If that is the case, the college has traditionally left the decision about whether to hold class to the faculty. While travel to and/or from campus may be dangerous, and for this reason some faculty may decide not to hold their classes, under the circumstances described above, it is considered safe for those who live nearby or on campus to participate in classes. Alternatively, as was the case on January 27, if a weather event is predicted to be extreme and highly dangerous, the college will close, and classes will be cancelled. The dean noted that she has heard some reports that some tenure-track faculty members have felt some pressure to hold classes when the college is closed, in particular when tenured

members of their departments do so. The dean wondered whether there should be

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further discussion about the policy, particularly given that more faculty are living further from campus. The members agreed that having a conversation would be worthwhile.

Continuing with “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Courtright informed the provost about some concerns that some student-athletes have raised following discussions at the day of dialogue. Some of these students feel that there were suggestions made that racism and a sense of white privilege are associated with student-athletes at Amherst, and they are upset by this notion. In addition, Professor Courtright noted that a number of students characterized part of the online exchange in the *Amherst Student* surrounding the mascot issue as cyber-bullying. She stressed the importance of addressing these issues as soon as possible. The provost agreed and said that he would consider ways to move forward.

Professor C. Dole next asked the president about the status of the strategic-planning effort. President Martin said that, while priorities that were developed and reviewed by the Steering Committee in the fall remain the same, and significant progress has been made on a draft of the strategic plan, she feels that more work needs to be done. The president explained that the plan must achieve a balance between the aspirational and the concrete; the document, and the priorities outlined in it, will serve not only as a guidepost for the college in the years to come, but as an underpinning for a capital campaign that has entered a “quiet phase” even sooner than we might have expected. The plan will be available to the community in the very near future, President Martin said. Professor C. Dole said that he had a sense that the trustees may have articulated some concerns about the college’s finances at the board’s recent meeting and wondered how this might be affecting the strategic planning process. President Martin said that the trustees recognize that Amherst must be disciplined about its finances, and they are paying close attention to the college’s increasing reliance on the endowment to sustain the operating budget—a trend that can leave Amherst vulnerable to the swings of financial markets. The trustees’ discussion has not had an impact on the strategic plan. Professor Douglas asked whether any thought had been given to rethinking Amherst’s need-blind, financial aid policies. It is recognized that the college’s very generous financial aid policies leave little room to direct resources to other efforts. The goal is to retain Amherst’s core commitment to financial aid, while maintaining flexibility, President Martin said in closing.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

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The thirteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, February 16, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder. Provost Uvin was absent.

Under "Topics of the Day," President Martin informed the members that she anticipates that a draft of the strategic plan will be shared with the community next week and a letter about follow-up to the *Day of Dialogue on Race and Racism* later this week.

Turning to another topic, Dean Epstein commented that the members' conversation about the Committee of Six's course release pilot seemed to end abruptly at the last meeting. She suggested that it would be helpful to ensure that a common understanding had been reached. Taking into account the arguments for the release that the members had advanced, the president and the dean had decided that the committee should continue to receive a course release. Dean Epstein said that, since members of the Committee of Six will have a reduced teaching load during the time they serve, the informal practice of protecting Committee of Six members from committee service (other than from service on the Committee of Six itself) for a period of time after their term concludes should end.

Professor C. Dole thanked President Martin and Dean Epstein for agreeing to continue granting the course release, which he feels is essential. He asked for clarification about the past practice of protecting Committee of Six members from other committee service. Dean Epstein said that it is her understanding that in the past, when the Committee of Six has made appointments to committees, colleagues who were rotating off the Committee of Six, and others who had served recently, often were not assigned committee work for a period of time. While it would not be her aim to have recent Committee of Six members appointed to major committees, Dean Epstein feels that it is appropriate for former members to serve on committees, particularly if they have received course releases during their time on the committee. Professor Marshall said this understanding makes sense. Professor C. Dole asked if the course release policy for the Committee of Six would be codified. The dean said that future presidents should have the flexibility to decide whether they want to continue granting the release. For this reason there should not be a formal policy. Professor Kingston said that he would trust future Committees of Six to act humanely in ensuring that those who have recently served on the committee are not burdened with unreasonably onerous committee service for a period of time thereafter.

The committee next reviewed drafts of the letters that are sent annually to candidates and chairs regarding tenure procedures and suggested some revisions to these documents. The committee then turned to a discussion of Senior Sabbatical Fellowship proposals that had been submitted for the 2015-2016 academic year. Recommending that the proposals be approved, the members, the president, and the dean, agreed that the research projects for which funding is being sought are compelling. The next step will be for the board to vote its approval of the fellowships in March.

Conversation continued, with Dean Epstein raising the question of whether to charge an ad hoc committee with reviewing Amherst's tenure, reappointment, and promotion processes, which, she noted, have not undergone an evaluation since 1998. She wondered whether it might be valuable to reexamine the procedures and whether it might be helpful to streamline some processes, without diminishing the thoroughness and rigor of the review. For example, she asked for the members' views on whether there might be approaches to evaluating tenure-track candidates' teaching that might be preferable to the current procedure of soliciting and reviewing

evaluations from every student in every class taught by the candidate during his or her time at Amherst. The dean also asked whether it might be informative to assess whether letters from

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colleagues in other departments and other Five-College institutions about candidates' service aid the committee's decision making. Dean Epstein noted that some members had raised questions about the committee's practice of asking some departments to solicit additional letters from external reviewers, when the committee feels that having additional perspectives on a case would be helpful. She also wonders whether it might be useful to gain greater clarity about tenure practices at other institutions. The dean asked the members for their thoughts on the idea of undertaking a comprehensive look at Amherst's tenure process.

Professor Marshall said that he finds the letters from colleagues to be helpful in judging candidates' record of service. Agreeing, Professor C. Dole commented that, in his experience, the letters from Five-College colleagues are valuable. While noting that the current process is steeped in paperwork, Professor Douglas said that he has been impressed with its fairness and effectiveness overall. He feels that the college should err on the side of inclusiveness, and that there could be a cost to streamlining procedures; the current process seems to work well. Professor Corrales concurred with the idea that streamlining procedures would be ill-advised. Professor Marshall expressed the view that it could be helpful to review the tenure process in a comprehensive way, as did Professors Corrales and Courtright. Dean Epstein asked the members if they feel that teaching evaluations should be standardized across departments, and whether there should be greater equity in regard to how the evaluations are administered. At present, she noted, the ways in which teaching evaluations are developed and administered vary a great deal by department. In some cases, she understands, untenured faculty members themselves develop and administer their evaluations, which she feels is problematic. Professor Marshall said that he would support exploring the idea of standardizing teaching evaluations. In regard to the procedure of soliciting additional letters from outside reviewers, Professor Kingston commented that the practice, which has been in place for a little more than a decade, should be incorporated into the tenure process formally. Doing so would require a vote of the faculty, it was noted.

Professor Douglas questioned the necessity of charging a committee to examine the tenure process. He agreed that it would be helpful to consider standardizing teaching evaluations; he also thought a small set of other issues pertaining to tenure might be considered by the Committee of Six and brought to the faculty for a vote without revisiting the process as a whole. Professor Douglas expressed the view that a faculty vote in support of curtailing existing processes would be unlikely. Noting that the faculty had voted in the fall to require that teaching evaluations be solicited from students in classes taught by tenured faculty, as well as untenured faculty, Professor Marshall commented that the moment seems right for standardizing teaching evaluations. It was agreed that the conversation had revealed that most members do not feel that the tenure process is in need of an overhaul. Rather than appointing a committee to explore faculty personnel processes in a comprehensive way, the members felt that the most fruitful approach would be for the Committee of Six to examine a set of issues that the members identify as pressing, and to bring proposals to the faculty for discussion and approval. President Martin noted that the Office of Institutional Research would be available to assist the committee with its work, for example if the members wish to gather comparative data from peer institutions. The members agreed that it would be helpful to gather such information. It was noted that forming an ad hoc committee at this time would also not be advantageous because ad hoc committees may be required to implement the recommendations of the strategic plan. The dean commented, for example, that a curriculum committee will likely be formed.

Conversation turned to the topic of whether to shift responsibility for developing recommendations for the college calendar from the College Council, as its current chair has

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requested, to another committee. The members discussed whether the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) might take on this work. The dean noted that Professor Honig, chair of the CEP, with whom she has consulted on this question, has expressed the view that the CEP is already very busy with the work that is within its current purview, and that it would be best for faculty committees to share responsibility for faculty governance. Professor Kingston said that he does not favor asking the CEP, which already has significant burdens, to take on an additional responsibility. Professor Corrales agreed, recommending that the College Council continue to have responsibility for developing the calendar proposals that are brought to the faculty. Dean Epstein noted that the College Council is currently considering a proposal that would reduce the spring semester to thirteen weeks and include three make-up days for class time lost to inclement weather and/or a campus-wide day of dialogue.

After some discussion, it was agreed that, in future, the calendar should be developed by the dean and the registrar, forwarded to the Committee of Six for review and comment, and then forwarded to the faculty for approval. The College Council need not be involved. On a related matter, the members returned to the issue, discussed briefly earlier in the year, of revising the charge of the College Council. The members noted that the current charge is a bit ambiguous, and that the role of the council lacks clarity. Professors Corrales, Douglas, and Marshall, who have served on the College Council, said that the work of the committee is detail-focused, and that the calendar and theme house programming occupy much of the committee's time. President Martin expressed the view that it would be desirable for faculty and students who serve on committees to operate at the level of policy and to be doing interesting work that has an impact. It is her understanding that the College Council serves in an advisory role to the Office of Student Affairs. The committee decided to revise the charge of the College Council, with the goal of achieving greater clarity about the Council's role. It was agreed that Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, and Lisa Rutherford, chief policy officer and general counsel, should be consulted about a vision for the committee and about its role now and in the past. Professor Douglas agreed to work on a draft of a new charge for the committee's discussion.

Dean Epstein noted that the way in which calendar proposals are currently developed, which involves significant faculty committee time at a nuts-and-bolts level, raises questions about effective administration and governance. President Martin said that she sees two related-but-separable issues that have been raised in the past—a concern that faculty have too many administrative burdens, and a concern that committees may not be working as well as they could. Dean Epstein commented that committees seem to be functioning well and getting work done, and that proposals are flowing to the Committee of Six and to the faculty effectively. President Martin agreed. The administrative burdens placed on the faculty seem to be of greater concern, in the view of the president and the dean. President Martin said that she sees a distinction between governance and administration.

The president commented that it seems as though some administrative matters that are now taking up the faculty's time could be accomplished with the help of administrators, with faculty oversight when needed. There would then be more time for faculty to spend on substantive issues at the policy level, for example. Dean Epstein agreed and noted that she is interested in having the role of the department chair, which is a significant burden and has little impact, reimagined. Professor Courtright commented that the position of chair at the college has no authority; further, there is no perceived benefit in being chair, only the load of extra work and,

frequently, criticism from colleagues. Chairs do not necessarily take responsibility for planning or carrying out essential business on behalf of their programs or the college. Concurring, Dean Epstein expressed the view that department chairs should play a role in helping to run the

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college. Professor Courtright said that, in many departments, much of the work of the chair is delegated to the academic department coordinator, since not all faculty members are suited to be chairs and perform the task as part of a rotation. She sees the current system as deeply flawed. In addition, Professor Courtright wondered whether splitting the Committee of Six into two separate committees might allow a committee to focus more on administrative and governance work, with a separate committee being responsible for personnel matters.

In a related vein, Dean Epstein noted that, as a matter of effective governance, she believes that the practice of including the names of untenured faculty on the ballot for the election of the Committee of Six is problematic. Untenured faculty have rarely been elected, particularly in recent years, and tenured colleagues often do not recognize the names of the untenured, generating confusion and the need to do research to ensure that one is not voting unintentionally for an untenured colleague. Professor Kingston suggested that it would be helpful if the names on the ballot were linked to colleagues' faculty profiles, enabling those voting colleagues to learn about the person quickly. Professor Courtright raised the issue of associate professors' productivity as part of the discussion, noting that, once an assistant professor receives tenure, he or she is burdened with administrative roles, such as being chair, that make it challenging to focus on scholarship. She noted that her work with the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) has revealed that the productivity of associate professors is a nationwide issue at liberal arts colleges. Dean Epstein said that this is a topic that she has identified as needing attention as well

Continuing the conversation, Professor Douglas said that he would like to learn more about the issues associated with chairing at Amherst. Professor Marshall explained that it is not possible for chairs here to have an impact on building a good department. This responsibility is given to the dean. He noted that chairs have brief terms and are unable to push departments in particular directions during the limited time that they serve in the role. He expressed the view that chairs, because of the time demands, should not supervise staff in the Human Resources sense of the word. He noted that the chair of his department, chemistry, is required to serve as the supervisor of seven staff members. Dean Epstein said that she is interested in exploring the question of whether it would be beneficial to the college if chairs were able to put more of a stamp on their departments. Professor Courtright said that she would prefer that the chair have this level of impact, rather than simply mirroring the will of the department through his or her work. Chairs should have more of a voice, more authority, and more license to bring initiatives forward, in her view. President Martin wondered whether the faculty would be supportive of the idea of chairs influencing college decisions. At present, it would appear, they play little direct role in advising administration. Professor Douglas suggested that it might be helpful to explore whether Amherst's peer institutions have stronger chair cultures. The members agreed that among the questions that might be explored are the following: should the dean be charged with selecting efficacious chairs for departments? Should the chair be compensated or otherwise recognized?

The members agreed to continue their discussion of the role of chairs at a future meeting.  
The meeting adjourned at 5:36 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein

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**Amended March 4, 2015**

The fourteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, February 23, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder. Professor Douglas was absent.

Under "Topics of the Day," President Martin informed the committee that the Board of Trustees would soon be issuing a sustainability and investment policy. (The statement was sent to the community the next day. See the letter from Cullen Murphy '74, chairman of the board, posted online with the [Statement on Sustainability and Investment Policy](#) and [important sustainability efforts](#).) President Martin explained that the issue of divestment had initially been raised by students with respect to direct investment of the endowment in the coal industry. At the time, Amherst had no direct investment in coal—and the college still has no direct investment in coal. A request was then made to divest from direct investment of the endowment in fossil fuels. The board decided that the college should make a serious commitment to sustainability, including but not limited to investing with managers who take environmental considerations into account and achieving carbon neutrality for the college by a reasonable date. President Martin said that, while she anticipates that the board's statement will not endorse divestment of the endowment from fossil fuels, it will include an announcement that the college will develop a framework for investing with managers who incorporate environmental considerations into their investment decisions. At the conclusion of the discussion about the board's statement, Dean Epstein reminded the members that the Instruction Committee of the Board of Trustees will have its annual meeting with the Committee of Six, as part of its regular spring meeting on campus (March 26-28). Provost Uvin left the meeting and the committee turned to a discussion of the members' experience with the tenure process this year and to personnel matters.

Dean Epstein informed the members that she had recently sent to all chairs a survey about departments' and programs' practices regarding developing and administering teaching evaluations for tenure-track faculty members. It is her hope that the information gleaned from this exercise will inform discussions with the chairs at a March 6 chairs meeting, and with the Committee of Six, about strengthening the role of chairs at the college. A discussion with the full faculty could follow.

Turning to another topic, and following up on the committee's recent conversation about whether to undertake a comprehensive review of Amherst's tenure procedures, the dean asked the members for their views on revising the current procedure for forming ad hoc tenure committees. She noted that the current procedure reads as follows:

**4. Procedures Followed in Tenure Decisions [\(III. E., 4., a.\)](#)**

*a. Departmental Recommendation.* A recommendation concerning tenure originates in the candidate's department(s). The tenured members of the department(s) will make a recommendation to the Committee of Six for or against an appointment with tenure. **In cases where there are fewer than two tenured faculty in the department of a candidate for tenure, the Dean of the Faculty and the Committee of Six will appoint an *ad hoc* committee of tenured faculty in related departments to supplement or serve in lieu of the departmental committee in making a recommendation to the Committee of**

**Six.** In cases where a Faculty member holding appointments in two departments is recommended for tenure, a tenured

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colleague holding appointments to the same two departments will participate in the deliberation and voting in both departments. The Committee of Six, however, in its own consideration of the case, will not give double weight to the colleague's evaluation. The tenured colleague is expected to submit one letter summarizing his or her evaluation of the candidate for tenure. Departmental recommendations will include the following (Voted by the Faculty, December 1991):

The dean expressed some concern that the procedure allows for two tenured members in a department to make a tenure recommendation. She wondered whether it might be preferable to have the minimum number be at least three tenured colleagues, changing the language above to read, "fewer than three tenured members." Most members agreed that having at least three tenured members would be preferable. Professor Courtright suggested that the ad hoc committee be formed well before the moment of the tenure review. The committee discussed whether it would be most effective to establish the ad hoc committee at the time of hiring, before the reappointment review, immediately after reappointment, or at the time of the tenure review. Professor Kingston commented that creating an ad hoc committee would not recreate for small departments the benefits of large departments, and he noted that it could be problematic to have one or more tenured faculty members from outside a department, lacking both a stake in the department's future and specific expertise in the relevant field, nevertheless have ongoing input into departmental deliberations and judgments. Professor Courtright suggested that it might be best for the dean and the Committee of Six to appoint the ad hoc tenure committee following a positive reappointment. In this way, any colleagues from outside the department who would be appointed to the ad hoc committee would not need to be a part of "acculturating" the candidate into his or her department, but could participate in the candidate's annual reviews and in the observations of his or her classes—after reappointment and prior to the tenure review. Professor C. Dole expressed support for establishing this procedure. Professor Courtright stressed that it will be up to the dean to ensure that the ad hoc committee functions well, and that members from outside the department are fully informed and included in the process.

Based on the committee's discussion the previous week and today's discussion, it was agreed that the members would focus on evaluating three aspects of the tenure process—teaching evaluations (and whether their form and administration should be standardized across departments), the practice of soliciting additional letters from external reviewers, and revising procedures around ad hoc tenure committees. Discussion turned to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

Amended March 25, 2015

The fifteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, March 2, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Kingston noted that he had met recently with several students who had contacted him with concerns about the revisions to the 2015-2016 academic calendar that had been approved by the faculty on February 17. The students asked questions about the need to shorten the fall break and reading period, and Professor Kingston had explained that the revisions had been needed because Labor Day would fall so late in the upcoming fall semester. Since it had been agreed that the dean, with the assistance of the registrar, rather than the College Council, would develop future proposals for the academic calendar, Professor Kingston wondered how input from students would be incorporated into this new process. Professor Douglas said that he imagines that, while the dean and the registrar would focus on the details of the calendar, the College Council would still discuss broader issues surrounding the calendar, for example, a proposal to change to a thirteen-week semester in the spring. The students on the committee would be consulted, as they are now. The members agreed that having the College Council continue to have responsibility for considering broad questions and policies about the calendar makes sense, while the dean and registrar would focus on the details of implementation and management.

Continuing with questions from the members, Professor C. Dole, referring to the trustees' [Statement on Sustainability and Investment Policy](#) that had been shared with the community recently, applauded the board's commitment to sustainability. He asked President Martin if she would speak to the meaning of the following statement within the chairman's letter: "It [the statement] calls for developing a framework for investing with managers who thoughtfully and consistently incorporate environmental considerations into their investment decisions." The president responded that the college's investment policy will place emphasis on working with managers who incorporate environmental considerations into their investment decisions. There are certainly some account managers who make such considerations more of a priority than other account managers do, President Martin commented. Since the college has no direct investment in coal, the trustees felt that making a statement about divestment would be largely symbolic, and ineffective. When developing its statement, the board wanted to present goals for the college that would be principled and consequential. The members then turned to personnel matters, including a discussion of a nominee for a John J. McCloy '16 Professor of American Institutions and International Diplomacy for fall 2015, and Provost Uvin left the meeting.

Conversation turned to the following draft motion to revise the current procedures for forming ad hoc tenure committees:

#### **DRAFT MOTION**

Motion:

The Committee of Six proposes the following revisions to the *Faculty Handbook*, as indicated in bold caps, to section [III., D., 4.](#), paragraph five, section [III. E., 4., a.](#), and [section III., G.](#) effective in 2015-2016:

#### **4. Reappointment Procedures**

In cases where there are fewer than ~~two~~ **THREE** tenured faculty in the department of a candidate for reappointment, the dean of the faculty and the Committee of Six will appoint an *ad hoc* committee of tenured faculty

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in related departments to supplement or to serve in lieu of the departmental committee in making a recommendation to the Committee of Six.

**FOLLOWING THE CANDIDATE'S POSITIVE REAPPOINTMENT DECISION, ALL MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE WILL PARTICIPATE IN ANNUAL CONVERSATIONS WITH THE CANDIDATE AND MAY OBSERVE HIS OR HER TEACHING, UP UNTIL THE TIME OF THE TENURE REVIEW. THE COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED AT THE TIME OF**

**REAPPOINTMENT WILL (IN LIEU OF THE DEPARTMENT) MAKE THE RECOMMENDATION TO THE COMMITTEE OF SIX AT THE TIME OF TENURE.** The Dean will remind departments of deadlines for review of individual reappointments. These are usually taken up by the Committee of Six early in the spring semester unless a department makes a negative recommendation in the spring of the penultimate year of a faculty member's initial appointment. In that case, the Committee of Six will review the case in the spring of the penultimate year.

### **4. Procedures Followed in Tenure Decisions**

In the spring of the academic year preceding that in which a tenure decision will be made for an individual candidate, the candidate and department chair will be informed in writing by the dean of the faculty of the schedule and procedures to be followed.

*a. Departmental Recommendation.* A recommendation concerning tenure originates in the candidate's department(s). The tenured members of the department(s) will make a recommendation to the Committee of Six for or against an appointment with tenure. In cases where there are fewer than ~~two~~ **THREE** tenured faculty in the department of a candidate for tenure, **THE AD HOC COMMITTEE APPOINTED AT THE TIME OF REAPPOINTMENT WILL (IN LIEU OF THE DEPARTMENT) MAKE THE RECOMMENDATION TO THE COMMITTEE OF SIX.** ~~the dean of the faculty and the Committee of Six will appoint an ad hoc committee of tenured faculty in related departments to supplement or serve in lieu of the departmental committee in making a recommendation to the Committee of Six.~~ In cases where a Faculty member holding appointments in two departments is recommended for tenure, a tenured colleague holding appointments to the same two departments will participate in the deliberation and voting in both departments. The Committee of Six, however, in its own consideration of the case, will not give double weight to the colleague's evaluation. The tenured colleague is expected to submit one letter summarizing his or her evaluation of the candidate for tenure. Departmental recommendations will include the following (Voted by the Faculty, December 1991):

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**Promotion**

In cases where there are fewer than ~~two~~ **THREE** tenured full professors in the candidate's department, the dean of the faculty and the Committee of Six will appoint an ad hoc committee of tenured full professors from related departments to serve as the promotion committee. Should the department have one member at the rank of tenured full professor, he or she will also serve. At the request of the candidate, the promotion committee may include up to two other tenured full professors from the college faculty, chosen by the candidate in consultation with the dean of the faculty. The Committee of Six reviews all candidates for promotion. The president formulates the various recommendations and presents them to the Board of Trustees, together with his or her own views. All promotions must be voted by the Board of Trustees (voted by the Faculty, May 2007).

Some members noted that, when the committee had had its discussion about this topic the previous week, they had not recalled that there is language in the *Faculty Handbook* about the formation of ad hoc committees at the time of reappointment and promotion to full professor, as well as at the time of tenure. Professor Marshall expressed the view that the issues to consider are different at the time of promotion to full professor, and that it might be best at this time for the faculty to consider the question of ad hoc committees for tenure and reappointment only. He expressed support for the idea that, if an ad hoc committee is formed at the time of reappointment, it should continue as the ad hoc committee for the tenure review. Continuing, Professor Marshall suggested that, if the number of tenured members in a department should increase during the time after reappointment and before the tenure review, the extra-departmental colleague(s) on the ad hoc committee should continue to serve, i.e., the committee should not disband. He said that language to this effect should be incorporated into the motion. Finally, he would imagine that the dean would normally include the two or fewer tenured members of the department on the ad hoc committee, but he said that he would not want to preclude the greater freedom and the possibility of excluding one or both that is possible under the current language.

Continuing the conversation, Professor C. Dole expressed the view that the language of the motion should indicate that the ad hoc committee would be constituted in such a way that it supplements the existing tenured members, so as to achieve the desired minimum of three. He said that he could not imagine a scenario in which the dean would want to constitute an ad hoc committee that excluded tenured members of a small department. Professor C. Dole said that, if such a committee were to be constituted, it should be constituted after a successful reappointment. Otherwise, it would need to be formed at the time of the candidate's hiring, so that the ad hoc committee would be able to take part in annual reviews, etc. Taking this approach, as was noted during the committee's previous discussion, might breed resentment among department members who are trying to integrate the new colleague into the department. As for a department reaching the threshold of three tenured members after the constitution of the ad hoc committee, Professor C. Dole suggested that it might make sense just to add the new tenured member to the ad hoc committee (making it, presumably, a group of four). Professor C. Dole commented that, given the brevity of the typical post-reappointment period (two years of teaching, once back from leave), there wouldn't be much time for the new or newly tenured member to get up to speed (sufficiently,

that is, to replace the outside member of the committee). Increasing the threshold to three for promotion to full professor seems reasonable for purposes of consistency, he commented.

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Following up, he said that he wonders what sort of impact taking this approach might have—for example, how many departments have fewer than three full professors?

Professor Kingston said that he sees a real cost to bringing colleagues from outside the department into these important processes by creating ad hoc committees, given that these individuals do not have the same stake or expertise in the decisions as department members. He questions whether having two department members make a tenure recommendation is really too few. Professor Kingston noted that an outside colleague who participates as an ad hoc committee member in the decision at the time of reappointment and tenure would have a significant impact on what is a departmental matter. Professor Courtright commented that she sees a difference between having an outside colleague serve as a mentor for an untenured member of a department, a role that would not be part of being an ad hoc committee member, and being an evaluator at the time of reappointment and tenure. Professors Courtright and Corrales expressed the view that having an outside colleague be a part of decision making when there are only two tenured members in a department would be particularly helpful as a means of ensuring that the process runs smoothly and all procedures are followed. Professor Courtright said that having outside colleagues contribute to personnel processes from the time of reappointment until the tenure review—observing the candidate’s classes and participating in annual conversations, for example—would be helpful in the realm of documentation and would benefit the candidate. At the conclusion of the conversation, it was agreed that Dean Epstein and Associate Dean Tobin should revise the motion in light of the committee’s views and share it with the committee again. The members then turned to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:44 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended April 2, 2015**

The sixteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, March 23, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with the dean discussing with the members colleagues who might serve on a Memorial Minute Committee for John Halsted, Winkley Professor of History, Emeritus, who died on February 25, 2015. It was agreed that the dean should invite Professor Servos to chair the committee and Professors Couvares and Williamson to serve.

The dean next shared with the members information about the tenure-line hires who will begin their appointments at the college on July 1. She noted that eight searches have yielded a group of talented and accomplished tenure-track assistant professors. In addition, the chemistry department is delighted that Professor David Hansen will be returning to Amherst as a senior hire in the department. Dean Epstein commented that working in collaboration with academic departments to shape the next generation of the Amherst faculty has been deeply rewarding. The dean applauded departments' investment in generating applicant pools that were distinguished by both the academic excellence and diverse backgrounds of the candidates. The search in Political Science will be re-run next year, she noted. The committee asked if all hiring is now complete. Dean Epstein said that tenure-line hiring has concluded, but that some visiting positions have not yet been filled.

The dean introduced the new colleagues briefly. She informed the members that the biology department will welcome Jeeyon Jeong, who studies the role and molecular control of metals such as iron or zinc, which are required by organisms (from plants to animals) but are often toxic at higher concentrations. The Department of Black Studies and the Department of History await the arrival of historian of the Black Atlantic Mary Hicks, who has accepted a joint appointment. Crystal Valentine will become the newest member of the computer science department. She explores "big data" algorithms and architectures. Pooja Rangan describes her teaching and research as engaging with "critical discourses of power, difference, and visibility, with a special focus on documentary and humanitarianism." She will join the English department and the film and media studies program. The economics department will welcome Collin Raymond. A specialist in behavioral economics, he seeks to develop new methods for understanding how psychological biases influence people's decisions when they are confronted with risk. Raphaël Sigal, a scholar of twentieth-century French literature and thought, will join the French department. Rafeeq Hasan, who studies conceptions of autonomy, has accepted an appointment in the philosophy department. Deborah Holoien will join the psychology department. Her research focuses on interracial relations.

The members next turned to the process of selecting which member in his or her first year on the committee would rotate off the Committee of Six, since only two members would be leaving the committee after completing full two-year terms. By vote of the faculty, at least three members of the Committee of Six are elected each year. See the relevant [Faculty Handbook language](#) (IV., S., 1., a.) below.

At least three of the members of the Committee of Six are elected in the spring of each year by direct faculty ballot. The first list circulated to the faculty consists of all those members of the faculty eligible for election to

the Committee of Six. Each faculty member voting must vote for the exact number of vacancies to be filled. On the second ballot, the number of names is four times the number of positions remaining to be filled. On

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each succeeding ballot, the number of names presented on the ballot is twice the number of positions remaining to be filled. To be elected, a faculty member must receive a majority of the votes cast on a particular ballot. Balloting continues until all the positions to be filled have been filled by faculty members who have received a majority of the votes cast.

The members then drew straws, and Professor Courtright drew the short straw. She will rotate off the committee at the end of this academic year. Professors C. Dole, Douglas, and Marshall will continue on the Committee of Six in 2015-2016, and three new members will be elected this spring.

Conversation turned to the [draft of the Strategic Plan](#). The discussion began with Professor Courtright asking the president why the concept of positioning Amherst as a research college is not part of the plan. President Martin said that some constituencies found the term confusing and consistently misinterpreted it. For example, some people thought that the college is aspiring to be more like a research university that puts less emphasis on undergraduate education. Professor C. Dole commented that the strategic planning committee on which he served, The Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning, considered the idea of the research college in terms of the “twin solitudes” of teaching and research. He noted that the idea of intensifying and enlivening the intellectual community at the college, which was explored as part of the concept of a research college, seems to have been lost and is not part of the draft plan. President Martin noted that, while enhancing the vibrancy of Amherst’s intellectual community is not addressed within the draft plan as part of an explicit discussion of a research college, the plan emphasizes intellectual community and describes the new humanities center and science center, both of which have an interdisciplinary emphasis, as promising to have a significant impact on intellectual life at Amherst. The projects are discussed within the draft plan in this context.

Continuing with the discussion about the strategic plan, Professor Corrales commented that the document is a pleasure to read and that he admires the discussions within the chapters. He finds the goals, as they are articulated, to be rather generic, however, and said that he would have liked to see more attention given to innovation and new ideas. Professor Corrales asked the president about the paragraph on page twenty-five of the draft plan that begins as follows: “We realize the valid concerns in our community and across the society about the rising costs of higher education. To be financially accountable requires that we be able to say no to good ideas that we cannot afford, that we challenge our administrative and support areas to manage against a tight budget, and that we identify what we will no longer support in order to launch new initiatives.” Professor Corrales wondered what programs or resources might be sacrificed and if there are guidelines for determining what might be cut. He asked if more specifics could be included in the final plan. Professors Kingston and Douglas also were curious about this section and noted that the draft plan doesn’t offer specifics about cuts that might be envisioned or how to choose among competing priorities.

President Martin said that the section referenced is intended to articulate an approach to thinking about financial discipline as a general matter, which is why no specifics are noted. There are no specific plans. Decisions about trade-offs will be made using the same processes that the college uses now, she said. Generally, the goal is to tie as much of Amherst’s spending as possible

to the core academic mission. As the college moves forward, at times choosing among different options will need to happen at an operational level. This passage is meant to

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signal to the campus and the college's supporters that Amherst recognizes the need to practice financial discipline, President Martin said. Good ideas will need to compete with one another, since not all of them can be funded. Professor Corrales agreed that fiscal prudence is important for sustaining the college's financial model, but he thinks that it would be helpful to have more specific information. More generally, Professor Kingston thought that the draft plan would benefit from having a unifying vision or guiding theme that would tie together the ideas and recommendations that are being brought forward. President Martin said that, at a later stage in the process, as the college gears up for the upcoming comprehensive campaign, there will be more of an emphasis on creating a descriptor or tag line for the campaign, which will be developed on the basis of the strategic plan.

The committee continued its discussion of the draft of the strategic plan, with Professor Marshall commenting that there seem to be a proliferation of good ideas that are articulated. He expressed concern about the degree of faculty time that could be required to implement new ideas, noting that there does not seem to be a plan to identify things that faculty members currently do that they might be relieved of in order to take on new responsibilities. Professor Douglas said that he prefers the draft plan to the reports of the strategic planning committees, which were shared earlier. In particular, he feels that the connection drawn in the plan between environmental sustainability and fiscal sustainability is well done. Earlier reports had not mentioned the curriculum, which was a remarkable omission in his view. He is pleased by the recommendation within the draft plan to establish a faculty-led committee to explore the curriculum, though he would like to have seen the plan call for a renewed commitment to writing. In Professor Douglas's view, Amherst should explore putting additional structures in place to enhance the attention that students receive on writing.

The members discussed the plan for constituting the curriculum committee recommended in the draft plan. Dean Epstein said that it is her intention to form the committee this spring. This schedule will allow the committee to formulate questions and to identify data that it will need. The Office of Institutional Research can then work on gathering information over the summer. The work of the committee will be significant and considerable, and it will be given all of the resources that it will need to do its job, Dean Epstein noted. Professor Douglas said that he has received emails from alumni who express a desire for Amherst to undertake curricular reform. President Martin said that, in her recent meetings with alumni in New York, some asked for evidence that the faculty is committed to taking a serious look at the curriculum. Among other things, she responded by pointing out that the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) requested that the strategic plan include a recommendation that the curriculum should be reviewed.

Continuing the conversation about the curriculum, Professor Corrales noted that the college grants academic departments autonomy in proposing FTEs, which is the primary way in which the faculty shapes the curriculum. President Martin commented that the CEP is still using the guidelines for FTE allocation that were established by the Committee on Academic Priorities. It seems time to take a fresh look at these guidelines. It is expected that the faculty will consider and decide questions such as what all Amherst students should learn. Professor Courtright noted that the faculty is changing and may see curricular needs and approaches in new ways, another reason to gather faculty perspectives at this time. In response to Professor Douglas's support for the plan's emphasis on environmental sustainability, Professor Courtright expressed some concern that

sustainability and climate change is the one social issue that is highlighted in the draft plan, and that there is the suggestion that the college take on an activist role in this sphere. Why would Amherst not make a commitment to addressing other urgent social issues, such as

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war or racism, she wondered. The draft plan mentions that the college should take a leading role in educating not only its students, but the public about this issue and taking action to “stem the growing threat” (see page seven of the draft plan).

In response to Professor Courtright’s comments, Professor Douglas reiterated his view that environmental sustainability fits nicely with fiscal sustainability, and that a commitment to environmental sustainability is a central part of creating a viable future for all human beings. President Martin noted that the draft plan calls for the college to continue to have an impact at a national level on addressing important social issues beyond sustainability, in the area of sexual assault and gender equity (see page eighteen), as well as diversity and equity, for example, but Amherst’s education will continue to be the college’s primary contribution, she said. Professor Kingston emphasized that, rather than identifying particular social issues on which to focus its advocacy and attention, Amherst should work toward providing an educational experience that will give students the tools that they need to go out into the world to make whatever changes they wish in whatever realms they choose. He supports the idea of curricular reform to identify potentially worthwhile curricular innovations that are unlikely to be pursued under the current system of FTE allocation. As one example, given the increased student interest in engineering, and the potential importance of engineering knowledge in addressing pressing issues such as climate change, the college might consider offering engineering courses within the curriculum, or making it less difficult to pursue an engineering degree through a consortial relationship than it is now. The dean said that the curriculum committee should certainly consider a proposal of this kind as part of its examination of the curriculum. President Martin thought that it would be a good idea to consider such a proposal.

The draft plan’s recommendation regarding ensuring faculty retention was also discussed briefly. The dean was asked if retention is a problem. Dean Epstein responded that there is not a faculty retention problem at Amherst, but that it is necessary to work harder on issues of retention because of the changing demographics of the faculty. Spousal/partner accommodations is an area of focus during this time of increased faculty hiring, and a challenging issue to address, beyond offering short-term visiting appointments, she noted. Commenting that childcare is absent from the draft plan, Professor Kingston asked whether attention will be given to improving childcare, particularly as more and more faculty with young families join the Amherst community. The dean said that she expects that childcare needs will be discussed.

Continuing the conversation, Professor C. Dole noted that the draft plan gives a great deal of attention to ideas around teaching and attention to student time. Like Professor Marshall, he expressed some concern about faculty time and how to create more time for research, for example. To this end, Professor Corrales wondered whether it might be possible for Amherst to offer full-year sabbaticals after six semesters of teaching. Noting that it would not be affordable to expand the sabbatical program in this way, President Martin wondered if consideration should be given to offering a small number of supplemental leaves of this kind that could be made available through a competitive process. Dean Epstein commented that, if such a program were to be put in place, it would be helpful not to limit the leaves to faculty who are very productive, but to make them available also to faculty who might be experiencing problems moving forward with their scholarly or creative work. Professor Douglas commented that the new “topping up” policy has been very helpful in providing additional time and resources to support research. Professor C. Dole

suggested that time to maintain scholarly momentum could also be made available by providing course releases to allow faculty to participate in programs such as faculty seminars or reading groups.

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Discussion of the draft plan concluded with Professor Douglas commenting that he finds the graphs that have been provided as part of the document to be informative. He feels that it would be helpful to have additional graphs that offer information on the socioeconomic diversity of the student body. The members discussed the ways in which the draft plan addresses issues of diversity, broadly defined. The committee expressed support for the recommendation that there be a commitment to meeting the educational and wellness needs of all students, noting the broad range of learning styles within the study body and the particular needs of students with disabilities. Professor Kingston asked a final question about the idea (see page twenty-four) of setting aside a portion of the endowment to create a pool for investment in major on-campus capital projects that would enhance clean-energy and energy-conservation efforts. He commented that as an economic plan, this recommendation seems unclear. President Martin agreed that the language should perhaps be removed because it is unclear. The concept to be conveyed is simply that the college will need a second co-generation plant to decrease the carbon-footprint further, and that it is not possible to fund the building of one at this time. The president and the dean thanked the members for their feedback on the draft plan.

Conversation turned to whether to have a faculty meeting on April 7 to discuss the draft strategic plan. The members supported holding a meeting for this purpose and voted six to zero in favor of forwarding the faculty meeting agenda to the faculty. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended April 2, 2015**

The seventeenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 2:00 P.M. on Monday, March 30, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder. Provost Uvin was absent.

The meeting began with President Martin reporting briefly on the meetings of the Board of Trustees that had been held the previous Friday and Saturday. She noted that the trustees had found their meetings with the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) and Committee of Six, part of the board's annual Instruction Weekend, to be productive and impressive. In addition, the trustees had enjoyed the dinners that they had had with members of the faculty. President Martin said that the board indicated support for the draft of the strategic plan and expressed the view that the final document will serve as an effective touchstone for the upcoming comprehensive campaign.

Conversation turned to an [opinion piece in the \*Amherst Student\*](#) (Issue 144-20) by Nora Gayer '16, which appeared online and in print, titled "On (In) Accessibility at Amherst." The members discussed Ms. Gayer's account of her experience and the question of whether Amherst should allow students to take fewer than three courses under extraordinary circumstances. Before deciding whether to bring this question to the faculty, as a change in the current policy would require a vote, the committee felt that it would be helpful to have more data about students with disabilities at Amherst and the flexibility with which current policies governing courseload reductions and course withdrawals have been applied. The members also expressed the desire to gain greater clarity about the college's compliance with disability law. The committee asked the dean to request information on these fronts from Lisa Rutherford, chief policy officer and general counsel, and Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer. The committee felt that it could be informative to speak with Ms. Coffey and Ms. Rutherford as well. The current policy appears in the catalog (page seventy-two) as follows:

Also in exceptional cases a student may petition their [sic] class dean at the time of admission or prior to the beginning of any semester for permission to enroll in a program of three courses per semester for any number of semesters of his or her enrollment at Amherst. Such permission may be granted only for reasons of physical disability (e.g., for students who have serious visual or hearing impairments) or compelling family responsibility (e.g., for students who are parents and have custodial responsibility for their children)."

The members turned briefly to a personnel matter. The committee next reviewed information provided by the Faculty Committee on Student Fellowships on its nominees for Rufus B. Kellogg University Fellowships. The Kellogg Fellowship is awarded for three years. A percentage of the Kellogg annual income is allocated to the student or recent graduate with preparation for research at a German university, and a greater percentage of the Kellogg annual income is allocated to two students or recent graduates with the strongest preparation for study and research in any discipline at any university. The Kellogg fund will provide the fellow attending a German university with \$19,000 for three years, and the two Kellogg Fellows will each receive \$30,000 for three years. The

committee voted six in favor and zero opposed to revise the agenda for the faculty meeting of April 7, 2015, to include a vote on the recommendation of nominees for Kellogg Fellowships.

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Under “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Kingston asked whether meetings have been taking place to consider the future of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE). If so, have faculty been involved? President Martin responded that an evaluation of the charge and practices of the CCE is under way. As noted in the draft strategic plan, the college is committed to offering students experiences in field-based learning and civic engagement, research opportunities, and internships. In addition, the plan recommends that the college create a teaching and learning center to explore innovative pedagogies, which may intersect with these forms of learning. The president said that the college would like to work toward coordinating and strengthening the work of the career center and the CCE to provide these opportunities, with more emphasis placed on tying these experiences to the academic side. The goal will be to make the process of learning about and applying for experiential opportunities less dispersed and more accessible for students. While multiple offices may be processing applications, administrative operations should take place behind the scenes, President Martin said. Any division of responsibilities should not be visible to students, who should be provided with what is essentially “one-stop shopping.”

Professor Corrales expressed support for the approach outlined by the president and for reexamining the goals and practices of the CCE. In his experience, the center does wonderful work, but has some requirements for awarding internships that seem out of alignment with the college’s mission. In particular, the center will only provide support if students are undertaking a project or experience that is community oriented. Research-exclusive summer internships seem difficult to fund. Professor Corrales feels that the center should be less narrow and should move toward a more capacious approach to offer support. President Martin commented that she anticipates that there will be some changes within the center. Continuing, Professor Corrales praised Amherst’s efforts to offer funding to all students for summer internships, noting that before universal funding was available, students from less advantaged backgrounds found it challenging to engage in unpaid internships because of financial considerations, which granted wealthier students greater career advantages.

Continuing the discussion, Professor C. Dole said that it is his hope that Amherst will continue to foster progressive community work. He commented that he values the lasting links to the community that have been formed through the CCE. Professor C. Dole has found it troubling that the center seems to have become a clearing house for internships and expressed hope that learning linked with the community will continue to be a priority. President Martin, who agreed that faculty should be involved in assessing the CCE, informed the members that she has asked Provost Uvin to gather the perspectives of members of the faculty. She said that she will check in with him to see what his conversations have revealed. President Martin asked the members what the prevailing sentiment is about the center among faculty. Professor C. Dole responded that tenure and promotion considerations seem to work against the center, being that it is unclear how participation in its efforts is factored into the evaluation for tenure and promotion. Developing community-based learning projects is very time-consuming, taking time away from other teaching and from research, he noted. Professor Courtright said that, in her experience, many Amherst students are deeply engaged in work with the community and value the experiences offered through the CCE. Other members agreed that the center may be serving the needs of a narrow group of students with this interest. Professor C. Dole said that the CCE is continually making efforts to reach out to faculty and that it has built important relationships with community

organizations. President Martin noted that, at some point, in the next few years, Amherst may be faced with a decision about whether to fund the center out of the college's operating budget. Currently, the CCE relies on donor support. Ensuring now that the center's

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activities are coordinated and aligned with faculty and student priorities is an important undertaking. She asked the members if they feel that the CCE is meeting the needs of enough students and faculty to justify providing college support in the range of \$1 million annually for operations and internships.

Professor Kingston next expressed some concern that the faculty was not informed that Dean Gendron, assistant dean of students and director of student conduct and community standards, has left the college. He noted that it would have been helpful if the Office of Student Affairs had communicated with faculty and let faculty know with whom they should be sharing concerns about disciplinary issues. President Martin agreed and said that she would speak with Ms. Coffey about the person in her office who will be handing these matters until a replacement is found for Mr. Gendron.

Continuing with "Questions from Committee Members," Professor C. Dole commented that he and other faculty have been troubled that some reporters from the *Amherst Student* have been speaking with faculty about various issues and not revealing that the interview is being done for purposes of publication. Professor Kingston said that he has had a student-reporter interview him without disclosing that the reporter planned to include Professor Kingston's comments in an *Amherst Student* article, or checking the accuracy of comments attributed to him prior to publication. The committee suggested that it might be helpful to offer the staff of the newspaper the opportunity to have some sessions with a local journalist to learn more about ethical reporting practices. President Martin said that she may be speaking with the editor of the *Amherst Student* soon about other matters and would share the committee's concerns. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended April 13, 2015**

The eighteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, April 6, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

Noting that most Amherst seminars have been extended from two hours to two-and-a-half hours, with the result that these courses conclude later in the day, now often at 4:30 P.M., Dean Epstein said that it has come to her attention that the change seems to be prompting some student-athletes to avoid taking seminars. The reason appears to be that the new timeslot conflicts with athletics practices, which often start between 4:00 and 4:30 P.M. The members expressed concern that areas of the curriculum may be constricted for some students because of a conflict between class times and commitments to athletics. Professor Courtright said that, in the past, she has received special permission to offer seminars in an earlier timeslot. The dean reported that there are not enough classrooms to permit special accommodations of this kind any longer. Professor Courtright expressed the view that, even when coaches communicate to student-athletes that there will be no penalties for arriving late to practice because of the schedule of a course, some students can feel pressure to avoid taking seminars—either because of their own feeling that they need to arrive on time to practice to be competitive, or because they discount what coaches are telling them. The members advised the dean to speak with Mr. Faulstick, director of athletics, about ways to address this problem. Professor Corrales advised the dean to speak with Professor L. McGeoch, as well, about course scheduling, as Professor McGeoch spent a great deal of time thinking about the schedule as chair of the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP). The dean said that she would follow-up on this issue with Mr. Faulstick and Professor L. McGeoch, as well as bringing the matter to the attention of the committee that is currently considering the place of athletics at the college.

Dean Epstein next discussed with the committee the Center for Community Engagement (CCE), and its relationship to a possible teaching and learning center and to new programming in the career center. The purpose of the conversations that are taking place, she said, is to reimagine the ways in which opportunities for experiential learning are developed, offered, and administered at the college. The goal is to broaden the reach of internships and other learning opportunities—so as to serve the educational needs of all Amherst students. Professor Kingston asked if a decision has been made to create a teaching and learning center. The dean responded that plans call for Amherst to establish a teaching and learning center that will focus on encouraging and supporting pedagogical development and innovation. The dean explained that, while Amherst has ongoing initiatives focusing on pedagogical innovation, there has been a lack of coordination among these programs. Under the umbrella of a teaching and learning center, it is envisioned that the efforts/resources of college entities, including, potentially, elements of the CCE, could be integrated and enhanced. The teaching and learning center could be created on a modest scale, Dean Epstein said, and a physical home for it is not imagined for the next five years or so. Initially, there would be need for a (half-time) faculty director, one administrator, and some office space. An instructional designer, hari kumar, would be central to the endeavor, and it is hoped that additional instructional designers may be hired. Mr. kumar will continue to work one-on-one with faculty, as well, Dean Epstein said. Professor C. Dole expressed some concerns that the plans, as outlined, may result in fracturing efforts that have been specifically focused on

community engagement. President Martin and Dean Epstein expressed confidence that integration will result in broadening opportunities for experiential learning. Provost Uvin stressed the importance of thinking carefully about what the college wants to achieve in this area and then having the principles that are adopted guide strategies that are developed and the

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institutional structures that are created. The provost said that he has been consulting with faculty on the question of how best to support these efforts, with the goal of considering ways in which experiential learning might be re-imagined in different terms. The space occupied by experiential learning encompasses many areas of the college—the CCE, career center, leadership programs run by the Office of Student Affairs, for example, Provost Uvin said. Building links among these areas and to the curriculum to achieve the greatest degree of learning should be the goal. The committee next turned to personnel matters.

Noting that members of the class of 1965, in response to the strategic plan, had forwarded [a curricular proposal](#) to the Committee of Six, Professor Kingston asked how such ideas will be shared and considered. Dean Epstein responded that ideas of this kind will be forwarded to the curriculum committee, once it is constituted. That committee will ultimately share ideas with the faculty as a whole. Proposals forwarded to the Committee of Six, such as this one, can be appended to the committee's minutes.

Conversation returned briefly to the topic of the college's academic policies governing students with disabilities who wish to take a reduced course load. Prior to the meeting, Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, provided the committee with information about the number of students with disabilities at Amherst. Katie Fretwell, dean of admission and financial aid, offered information about the financial implications of part-time status. The dean noted that Professor Honig, chair of the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), has informed her that a student has contacted the CEP and has requested to submit a proposal to revise the current policy to permit students with disabilities to take fewer than three courses a semester under extraordinary circumstances. The members agreed that, while it may become necessary to allow students to take fewer than three courses under extraordinary circumstances, the process used to evaluate requests to do so must be a rigorous and thorough one. Professor Marshall said that, in his view, the CEP is the appropriate governance structure to begin to consider this issue. The members agreed that the Committee of Six should meet with Lisa Rutherford, chief policy officer and general counsel, to gain greater clarity about the college's compliance under disability law. The members decided that it would also be helpful to meet with Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, the next week, as well, to learn more about the experience of students with disabilities at Amherst, as well as the related topic of current policies governing course load reductions and course withdrawals. In addition, the committee decided to ask Ms. Coffey for her perspective on the charge of the College Council, as the Committee of Six is considering bringing a proposal to the faculty to revise the charge. The dean agreed to invite Ms. Rutherford and Ms. Coffey to the committee's next meeting. Provost Uvin left the meeting.

As it does each year, the committee reviewed drafts of the dean's letters to chairs and candidates regarding reappointment procedures and offered some revisions. The members then turned to applications for Trustee Faculty Fellowships, Miner D. Crary Sabbatical Fellowships, and the Class of 1952 Eugene S. Wilson Fellowship. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to personnel matters.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

**Amended April 23, 2015**

The nineteenth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, April 13, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder. Provost Uvin was absent.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Kingston asked about the status of a [letter that had been sent to the committee by Professor Sitze](#) on behalf of a group of faculty signatories. Prompted by concerns about Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), these faculty members wrote to convey some questions. When the letter was received, President Martin had informed the committee that she would forward it to the Special Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst, which is currently at work. The president noted that the special committee would be examining the issue of concussions as part of its charge (see the Committee of Six minutes of October 20, 2014, which includes the charge). Professor Douglas asked if the special committee would be considering repetitive subconcussive traumas, specifically. President Martin responded that she had spoken with Shirley Tilghman, co-chair of the special committee, who informed her that the letter from the faculty had been shared with the committee, and that the issue of subconcussive traumas would be discussed. It was agreed that the letter sent by Professor Sitze would be appended to the Committee of Six minutes.

Continuing with "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Douglas asked the dean about plans for constituting a curriculum committee, a recommendation that emerged from the strategic-planning process. The dean said that she has been considering this matter and would soon make nominations for membership on the committee to the Committee of Six. It is envisioned that the committee will largely be made up of full professors who have been promoted to that rank relatively recently, and associate professors. Six faculty members, representing a range of disciplines; two students; and two staff members who support curricular initiative and/or instruction will serve. The dean said that she and the director of institutional research will also be members of the committee, ex officio. Professor Douglas asked what criteria have been used to determine whether members of the Board of Trustees serve on special committees. President Martin said that, in some cases, the college replicates the make-up of past committees that have looked at a particular issue. This was the case for the special committee that is examining the place of athletics, for example. President Martin and Dean Epstein said that it seems appropriate for the committee that is examining the curriculum to be composed of faculty, for the most part. Dean Epstein informed the members that the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) has expressed the desire to weigh in on the draft of the curriculum committee's charge. The dean said that she has agreed to share the draft charge with the CEP once it is completed. The draft charge will then come to the Committee of Six.

Turning to another matter, Professor C. Dole said that he would like to register some concerns about the proposed changes to the Center for Community Engagement (CCE). With plans to reimagine the ways in which the work of the CCE will be integrated with other college entities, and the new approaches that have been described, Professor C. Dole expressed concern that the college's commitment to building enduring and sustainable partnerships with community organizations is being weakened, if not threatened. Professor C. Dole also commented that there seems to have been a shift in vocabulary by the provost—away from "community engagement" and toward "experiential learning." If so, this would seem to represent a significant shift in the CCE's mission, and seem to communicate that the emphasis of the college's program will now be

solely on Amherst students learning from experiences in the community. In the past, the goal has been reciprocity; Amherst students have had valuable education experiences through their work with community organizations, and the organizations have benefitted in concrete ways

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through the students' contributions. President Martin said that Amherst remains committed to ensuring that both students and community organizations benefit from the educational experiences in which they participate under the auspices of the college. She noted that, in the week to come, Provost Uvin would be meeting with faculty to discuss the ways in which different learning opportunities will be developed, offered, and administered, and that she would also be meeting with faculty about this matter once she has more information from the provost and the group that is responsible for planning in this domain. President Martin said that she would provide the committee with an update on these conversations.

The committee next discussed [Professor Maxey's proposal](#) that there be a conversation about the place of academic freedom in the Amherst community. He shared statements from the [University of Chicago](#) and [Princeton](#) and urged the committee to consider whether Amherst might want to adopt a "similar articulation of principles." The members agreed that it would be worthwhile for the faculty to discuss this possibility. The members wondered whether Amherst is an outlier in not having a statement of this kind. It was noted that the references to academic freedom in the *Faculty Handbook* are brief. Professor Courtright suggested that the universities might have developed these statements in response to particular events and/or issues, and she expressed the view that some research should be done around this question. While all members agreed that commitment to the principle of academic freedom is fundamental, Professor Marshall wondered whether there is a sense that many faculty colleagues feel the need for such a statement or if this is a significant matter for a few. It was decided that Professor Douglas would draft a statement that could be brought to the faculty for discussion. He said that he would draw on the Chicago and Princeton statements to do so. Princeton seems to have basically adopted the Chicago statement, the members noted, and the committee supported taking a similar approach. The members agreed to review Professor Douglas's draft at their next meeting.

At 4:15 P.M., Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, and Lisa Rutherford, chief policy officer and general counsel, joined the meeting to address the committee's question about whether students with documented disabilities must be permitted to take fewer than three courses in a given semester, if it is determined that it is reasonable that they do so. Ms. Rutherford began her remarks by explaining that the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 require the college to make its curriculum and programs fully accessible to students with disabilities, by providing reasonable accommodations to its policies, procedures, and/or requirements. Under the ADA, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Ms. Rutherford said that, once it has been determined that a student has a disability that meets this definition, a "reasonable accommodation" must be provided, with limited exceptions. (She noted that there is a rigorous process in place at Amherst for determining whether a student has a disability as defined by the law, which includes documentation from the student's physician.) Ms. Rutherford explained that determining a reasonable accommodation is an interactive process in which the Office of Student Affairs works with the student, and the faculty members teaching his or her courses, to determine what accommodation will meet the student's needs, but which will not fundamentally alter curricular requirements. Accommodations might include special topics courses and/or extensions, for example. Ms. Coffey noted that faculty members have been very supportive when asked to provide such accommodations. If these options are exhausted and/or deemed to be insufficient for meeting the needs of the student with the disability, the college must permit the student to take

fewer than three courses. This accommodation must be offered at the beginning of the semester or during the semester, as the situation warrants, Ms. Rutherford

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said. A student cannot be asked to withdraw from the college if it is determined that he or she can be successful with accommodations.

Continuing the conversation, President Martin noted that she had just met with a student who is proposing a number of changes to college policies that the student has identified as creating obstacles for students with disabilities. The student also made a series of suggestions for the college to consider—including offering courses in disability studies and having class deans meet with students with disabilities to offer information and support, before problems emerge, rather than after. In regard to the financial implications of taking a reduced course load as an accommodation, the student asked if Amherst could be flexible in the criteria it uses to designate full-time status, for purposes of financial aid. President Martin said that the college will research whether it is possible to take this approach. The president said that she found most of the student's proposals to be reasonable and informed the members that the college will need to consider a series of changes. Amherst is committed to having policies, processes, and resources in place that will enable students with disabilities to be successful at the college, she said. In addition, the president commented that efforts will be made to communicate clearly what is available to students with disabilities. While the student had originally contacted the CEP to submit a proposal to revise the current policy to permit students with disabilities to take fewer than three courses a semester under extraordinary circumstances, the CEP was unable to address this matter at this time because of other pressing business. Since it is the college's legal obligation to allow students with disabilities to take fewer than three courses, under particular circumstances, the Committee of Six agreed that there is no need for a faculty committee to consider the current policy or to have a faculty vote. Ms. Rutherford was asked to draft a new policy, which she will share with the Committee of Six. As the meeting would be concluding at 5:00 P.M. and that hour was approaching, at the members' invitation, Ms. Coffey agreed to attend the committee's next meeting to discuss the proposal to revise the charge of the College Council and some other committees on which members of the Office of Student Affairs serve.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended April 27, 2015**

The twentieth meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, April 20, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, and Kingston; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder. Professor Marshall was absent.

The meeting began with the dean, with sadness, noting the passing of Fredric Cheyette, professor of history, emeritus, who died on April 14, 2015. Professor Courtright, Couvares, Chickering and Czap have agreed to serve on his Memorial Minute Committee, with Professor Couvares chairing. The committee noted Professor Cheyette's many contributions to the college over many years.

The members discussed a [proposal for academic calendars for the 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019](#) academic years. The dean noted that the College Council developed the proposals for the first two academic years ([see letter from Professor Heim](#), chair of the College Council), and that the registrar drafted the 2018-2019 calendar, according to the principles articulated by the College Council. The dean said that all three calendars have three full weeks of Interterm, thirteen class weeks in both the fall and spring semesters, fifteen instructional weeks per the federal definition for accreditation, three make-up days in the spring semester to be used to replace any class days lost because of cancellations due to bad weather or for use for campus-wide discussions, such as a day of dialogue. The proposed calendars also have four reading days when possible and four-and-one-half to five final exam days each semester. The dean informed the members that, if the make-up days are not used, the reading period would be extended. Plans call for the registrar to follow up with the actual dates for advising week, pre-registration, and spring break for each calendar when these dates are approved by the Five-College registrars.

Professor Kingston commented that shifting to a thirteen-week spring semester would represent a significant change. Dean Epstein said that it appeared from the faculty's discussion of the calendar for the 2015-2016 academic year that there is some support for making this change. President Martin wondered whether consideration had been given to reserving time during the semester for a week of activities around a particular theme, which would be explored in depth, a recommendation of the Enhancement of Student Intellectual Life strategic planning committee. Dean Epstein said that the proposals under consideration do not allow for such a period, and she pointed out that creating time for this endeavor would have significant consequences for the curriculum and would require a great deal of faculty time. The members then voted five in favor and zero opposed on the substance of the calendar proposals and five in favor and zero opposed to forward the proposals to the faculty.

In response to [a letter sent to the committee by Professor Hall](#), the members revisited the topic of the college's requirement that students be permitted to take no fewer than three courses per semester. Professor Hall argued that, "when curricular policy needs to be revised, it is up to the faculty to determine the new policy, consistent with the relevant legal considerations." Professor Courtright commented that, while it is important for the faculty always to have a voice, she does not feel that the faculty should vote on whether to adhere to the law. President Martin noted that Lisa Rutherford, chief policy officer and general counsel, has advised that there may be no need to alter the current policy, necessarily, but that exceptions to the policy must be made to be in compliance with the law. Professor C. Dole said that he can imagine an instance in which the faculty might want to vote not to comply with an unjust law in order to make a statement. Professor Kingston agreed, but noted that this does not imply a need to vote to comply with every new law. If there are alternative policies that would comply with the law, however, as Professor Hall's letter suggests, the faculty should choose among them. Professor Douglas suggested that the faculty could be notified of the change in policy, and comments could

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be solicited. Professor Corrales wondered whether a solution to this dilemma might be for the faculty to vote to authorize the deans or their designees in the Office of Student Affairs to provide exceptions to the current policy to bring the college into compliance with the law. Dean Epstein noted that the faculty voted on the current policy on April 4, 1989. The members discussed whether, as a matter of principle, the faculty should vote to meet legal requirements. Professor Douglas wondered whether a motion might be brought to the faculty for a vote that would stipulate that henceforth, the administration will give notice to the faculty when it is necessary to change policies to bring the college into compliance with federal law. President Martin said that having a vote on the language of a policy creates a forum for discussion. Dean Epstein expressed the view that, when the need to meet a legal requirement intersects with a curricular matter, there should be a faculty vote. It was agreed that a motion to revise the current catalog language about the minimum course requirements should be brought to the Committee of Six and then to the faculty for a vote. The dean said that she would bring a draft to the committee.

Conversation turned to [a proposal from the Committee on Educational Policy \(CEP\)](#) to pilot a new pre-registration process and to a [letter about the proposal](#) also forwarded to the committee. If approved by the faculty, this trial program would be in effect for three years and would commence with pre-registration for spring 2016 courses. The current version of the proposal is a revision of one that the CEP had forwarded to the Committee of Six in December. Professor Douglas said that the CEP has removed some of the details that had raised concern. Professor Corrales agreed. Yet, he also commented that the new proposal still doesn't address a fundamental problem. Under the current and proposed systems, there is little way to know how important a particular course is for a student's curriculum or how important one course is relative to another that a student may wish to take. Student emails to a professor invariably convey that a student very much needs or wants a course. Dean Epstein said that the proposed system would represent an improvement in this regard. If a student knows that he or she is guaranteed a spot in the class and chooses to pre-register for it, there would be a strong sense that the student would like to take the class. Professor Corrales wondered if Amherst might want to consider adopting a system used by some schools that involves chips, or another alternative system, that allows professors to learn more about the actual level of student need/interest in a course. Under the chip system, for example, if a student has a strong desire to take a class, he or she would have to "spend" a larger number of chips on it, leaving fewer chips for other courses. A professor seeing that a student is "spending" many chips would have a strong indication of the student's level of interest. President Martin commented that it seems clear that the current registration system does not serve students as well as it should, and Professor Courtright agreed.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Kingston said that he is very much in favor of having multiple rounds of pre-registration, but is opposed to the proposal to guarantee enrollment after pre-registration. Professor Corrales expressed the same view. Professor Kingston commented that there are many benefits to reserving some faculty control over enrollments until at least the beginning of the add-drop period, as students' enrollment decisions become clearer; as the grades from the previous semester are resolved, which may affect course choices; and so on. By removing this flexibility, he argued, the proposed system will force faculty to make unnecessarily costly and uninformed cuts, including cutting many students who may have a good chance of ultimately getting into a course. The CEP's proposal argues that incentives are required to induce faculty to drop students after pre-registration, as mere encouragement will not be sufficient. The evidence offered for this view is that, under the current system, faculty generally do not cut many students right after pre-registration, and many wait until the add-drop

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period. But, Professor Kingston noted, under the current system, there is no reason to cut students early, since after the pre-registration window ends, students have no opportunity to register for alternative courses until the add-drop period. Rather, faculty might reasonably believe that the kindest thing to do under the current system is to keep the students in the course to give them priority in case a spot opens up, even if there is very little chance of that happening. He argued that this would change if there were multiple rounds of pre-registration; in his view, faculty would willingly drop those students who seem unlikely to be able to take the course so that they could find alternatives. Professor Kingston said that he is optimistic that, with a second round of pre-registration, much of the problem would be resolved, and the number of students dropped during the add-drop period would be considerably reduced, even without introducing incentives to discipline faculty into compliance.

While he too has numerous concerns about the CEP proposal, Professor C. Dole said that he feels that it should be brought to the faculty for discussion. The other members agreed. Professor C. Dole suggested that it would be desirable to learn how other Five-College institutions would feel about the proposal and what impact it might have on Five-College students. Dean Epstein expressed the view that it would have very little impact, as Five-College students are not guaranteed spots in Amherst classes now when they pre-register, and would not be guaranteed spots under the new system. Five-College students do not find out if they are in a class for sure until the fall or the spring, she commented. There is flexibility, however, under the new system; if a professor wants to guarantee a Five-College student a place in his or her class, he or she can do so. Professor Douglas pointed out that, if Five-College students are included on pre-registration class lists, a faculty member could decide not to cut them and to reserve a space for them. Professor C. Dole wondered if Amherst's registrar would have a finalized list of Five-College students who pre-registered for courses in time for the roster management and second round of pre-registration being proposed under the new system. Dean Epstein said that she would check with the Five Colleges to determine how this issue might affect the proposed system. The members agreed that the proposal should be forwarded to the faculty for discussion. The committee voted one in favor, two opposed, with two abstentions, on the substance of the proposal and five in favor, zero opposed, to forward the proposal to the faculty.

The committee next returned to a discussion of [Professor Maxey's proposal](#) that there be a conversation about the place of academic freedom in the Amherst community. At the committee's request, Professor Douglas had created a [draft statement](#) for Amherst, borrowing from the Princeton's statement. The committee noted Amherst's current statements about academic freedom in the [pre-introduction of the Faculty Handbook](#) and [the tenure section \(III., E., 1.\)](#) and within the [Honor Code](#), as well the [statement on the website of the Department of Sexuality, Women's and Gender Studies \(SWAGS\)](#).

Professor Courtright suggested that any Amherst statement that is adopted should acknowledge that some topics may cause some students significant distress, and that there is value in notifying students in advance of classroom discussions of such topics. Professor Douglas expressed the view that such language should not be included in a statement about academic freedom, and that doing so could have a chilling effect on teaching, particularly for tenure-track faculty members. Professor C. Dole strongly agreed with this view. Professor Courtright, Professor Kingston, and Provost Uvin stressed the need to find language that would recognize freedom of thought and expression, while being sensitive to the needs of students.

At 5:00 P.M., Suzanne Coffey, chief student affairs officer, joined the meeting to discuss the Committee of Six's proposal to revise the charge of the College Council and some other committees on which members of the Office of Student Affairs serve. In fall 2014, the faculty

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voted that, for the 2014-2015 academic year, the chief student affairs officer or her designee, would serve on committees that currently list the dean of students as a member. See [Faculty Handbook section IV, S., 1](#). Ms. Coffey and the members reviewed potential changes to the charges of the following committees: *the Committee on Academic Standing and Special Majors, the Committee on Admission and Financial Aid, the Committee on Education and Athletics, and the Committee on Discipline. The changes are noted in the [linked document](#). The need to change the membership of these committees is largely the result of the change in title of the highest ranking administrator in the Office of Student Affairs. Formerly the dean of students, the title of the position is now chief student affairs officer. The dean of students position, when mentioned in the charges as they have been re-imagined, refers to the current incarnation of the position (currently held by Alex Vasquez), which now has different responsibilities.*

*Ms. Coffey noted that the guiding principle for any suggestions of changes in membership that would be made to include representatives from the Office of Student Affairs is to have the position with the responsibilities that best align with the work of the committee included among the committee's members. The proposed changes are structural in nature, Ms. Coffey emphasized, and are not being proposed with the individual currently occupying the position in mind. The question of whether the Committee on Education and Athletics should include the CSAO or the dean of students was discussed. Ms. Coffey, who said that she would serve if the faculty wishes her to do so, expressed the view that the dean of students could instead, as the major responsibilities of that position center around student activities. The members commented that, as the committee often focuses its work at the intersection of athletics and education, and as the college wishes to encourage that intersection, it might be preferable for the member from the Office of Student Affairs to be the CSAO or his or her designee. Ms. Coffey agreed. The committee next discussed some possible revisions to the charge of the College Council and agreed to share the proposed changes with the College Council, before bringing any revisions to the faculty for a vote. The members asked Dean Epstein if she would be willing to attend the meeting of the College Council in which the proposed revisions would be considered, and she agreed to do so and share any feedback that would be offered. The members then voted five in favor and zero opposed on the substance of the motion to revise the committees in the attached document, as indicated, and five in favor and zero opposed to forward the motion to the faculty.*

*The members next discussed whether to bring to the faculty a motion to abolish the Committee on Health and Safety, which hasn't met in more than a decade. The members voted five in favor and zero opposed on the substance of this motion and five in favor and zero opposed to forward the motion to the faculty. As a final note, Professor Courtright asked Ms. Coffey if she knew how many students have reported that the content of a classroom discussion has triggered a significant emotional response. Ms. Coffey said that she would be happy to research this question. Ms. Coffey left the meeting at 5:30 P.M.*

Discussion returned to the draft statement about academic freedom. Much of the conversation revolved around whether to include in the statement mention that faculty members should notify students in advance when sensitive material would be discussed during class time. Professor Douglas remained concerned that any language of this sort could be interpreted as an obligation that could create a limitation on academic freedom. Professors Corrales and Douglas felt that faculty members should not feel compelled to offer a "trigger warning." Professor C. Dole

agreed and noted that the draft statement addresses these concerns when it states that “members of the college community share in the responsibility for maintaining a climate of

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mutual respect.” Professor Courtright said that the language was not sufficient, and the message that is transmitted depends upon what the wording is. Neutral, qualified phrases such as “may alert” or “might notify” would not limit academic freedom. Professor Kingston said that it should be made clear that a faculty member’s choice to alert students to sensitive material would not constitute a violation of academic freedom.

The members discussed whether there is a need to bring a statement forward. Professor Corrales expressed support for bringing a statement to the faculty for discussion. The current statement in the *Faculty Handbook* seems to have an internal focus, and the issue of academic freedom, in his experience, often comes up in the context of outside speakers that are being brought to the college. He thinks it would be helpful for students to have a statement that articulates the view that just because an individual disagrees with an opinion, he or she cannot necessarily stop someone else from expressing the view, or opt out of educational requirements that involve such a view. Provost Uvin expressed the opinion that the college would benefit from having a stronger, clearer statement about academic freedom. Professors C. Dole and Courtright agreed. The members decided to share the draft statement about academic freedom with the College Council and the CEP to get the feedback of these committees, before deciding whether to bring the draft forward to the faculty. It was agreed that there should be a serious process of deliberation before any statement is adopted, and that it would be helpful to gauge the level of faculty interest in considering this issue. The members agreed that, if a statement is adopted, it will be important to convey to students, in particular, that the intent is to protect and allow freedom of expression for everyone, not to encourage or condone disrespectful and/or uncivil behavior toward others. Some individuals, it was noted, will likely view the statement, as currently written, as conservative and might think it suggests that the college is reacting against current movements on campus to show greater understanding of and sensitivity toward Amherst’s diverse populations. President Martin suggested that, perhaps, it could be made clear that the goal of any statement that is adopted is to ensure freedom of discussion about ideas, which is different than allowing epithets to be used that may be abusive and/or qualify as a form of harassment.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

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The twenty-first meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, April 27, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas (who participated in the meeting via Skype), Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with a brief discussion of personnel matters. Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Courtright commented that it is her understanding that some faculty members are drafting a letter to the administration to express concern about anticipated changes involving the Center for Community Engagement (CCE). She asked the president if she was aware of the letter, and President Martin responded that she was not. Professor Courtright said that some colleagues feel that there should have been more consultation with the faculty before decisions were made. According to some reports, 75 percent of the student body has "made use" of the CCE, Professor Courtright noted. Provost Uvin commented that that this statistic encompasses a broad array of interactions with the CCE and represents the percentage of students that have been touched in any way by the center. Professor C. Dole asked Provost Uvin about the use of the term "experiential learning" to describe the work of the CCE. Professor C. Dole wondered if the use of this term represented a larger shift in the mission of the CCE, which has been focused on "community engagement." Provost Uvin responded that much of what the center does can accurately be described as "experiential learning," and that he feels that it is appropriate to talk about the CCE in this way. In addition, he has used "experiential learning" to describe the "space" in which this type of learning happens at Amherst beyond the CCE, for example within the Career Center or in the Office of Student Affairs. This allows us to think more broadly about learning than only focusing on one single organization, the provost said.

Continuing with "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Douglas asked about the events described in letters that had appeared in the April 22, 2015, issue of the *Amherst Student*. As noted in its letter, the Amherst Hillel organized a dance party in the Powerhouse on the weekend before Israel's Independence Day for social purposes and to share information about Israeli culture. The event was advertised with posters that were put up around campus. The letter notes that the posters were torn down and vandalized. At the party, some students staged a "die-in," which the organizers felt "subverted the event." In the letter, the Hillel students suggested having a dialogue about the issues that had emerged during the weekend. The group expressed concern about the episode with the posters, as well as the disruption of the event that had occurred without consulting its organizers. Members of a pro-Palestinian student group felt that the members of Hillel had falsely accused the group of taking down the posters and have also suggested a dialogue. Dean Epstein said that she believes that Alex Vasquez, dean of students; Rabbi Bruce Bromberg Seltzer, the college's Jewish religious advisor; and Paul Sorrentino, director of religious life, plan to reach out to students from both groups to see if a meeting can be organized in the coming days. Professor Douglas expressed concern that the event had been disrupted by students for political reasons. Dean Epstein said that it is her understanding that the students with the pro-Palestinian views had been reasonably civil during the event. Before entering the party, campus police asked them to leave any signs outside, which they did. She noted that she had heard from some individuals that the event could be construed as a political event. Professor Douglas noted that whether the dance was a social or political event has no bearing on the issue of the disruption. President Martin suggested that Dean Vasquez collaborate with John Carter, chief of campus police, about procedures to follow when one student group may be disrupting the event of another.

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In response to a question posed by Professor C. Dole earlier, Provost Uvin provided an update on the follow-up to the day of dialogue on race and racism. He noted that all initiatives undertaken as a follow-up to the day of dialogue have been designed to encourage and enable members of the Amherst community to continue talking with and learning from each other. The provost said that he deliberately chose not to invest the community's limited time and resources in flashy short-term events, such as talks by major speakers. Instead, he has focused on the "invisible but hopefully more impactful work of increasing the capacity of people to travel into new territories." Continuing, Provost Uvin said that, after the day of dialogue, the second demand by the students of Black Lives Matter was that the college organize cultural competence training for the faculty. De facto, this is exactly what has happened, Provost Uvin noted, as many faculty members have in one way or another participated in workshops that have given them skills in this area. He informed the members that the number of faculty who have participated in a program related to the day of dialogue (or in the workshop for the day of dialogue itself) is now somewhere between twenty-five and thirty, which should have effects on campus for years to come. The provost then summarized recent efforts.

Provost Uvin noted that workshops titled "Facilitating Difficult Conversations Training for Students," which were held for four hours each, were organized in response to requests by students for the sort of tools that were employed during the day of dialogue. Each session consisted of a meaningful dialogue, followed by joint analysis of the process and discussion of methods. Provost Uvin noted that the dialogues have often been profound, with significant mutual learning occurring. Provost Uvin's hope now is that those students who attended will use what they learned in their own lives, and in their roles as leaders on the Amherst campus. Provost Uvin said that twenty four students (four seniors, six juniors, three sophomores, and eleven first-years) participated.

Other sessions titled "Facilitating Difficult Conversations Training for Faculty and Staff" were held over ten hours, the provost explained. These sessions were designed as a follow-up to the training done for the day of dialogue and helped participants develop a wealth of skills to lead conversations about difficult topics. He noted that the skills learned will be useful for staff and faculty members who want to deepen their capacity to engage with such issues in the future, whether in classes, in residences, in teams, or any other setting. Each session consisted of a meaningful dialogue based on a real event, followed by joint analysis of the process and discussion of methods. Provost Uvin noted that the dialogues have been intense and deeply thought provoking. He explained that four faculty members (two assistant professors and two full professors) and sixteen staff from across the college participated. As a result of this training, there will now be a group of people on campus who can be used as facilitators for future events. Provost Uvin informed the members that a significant number of community members, including many faculty members, were interested in this training but could not participate in April. The hope is to offer the sessions again next semester, possibly making use of a different format.

Provost Uvin next described a workshop that has been offered for staff supervisors. He explained that these sessions are part of the growing collaboration between the Office of Human Resources and the provost's diversity team. The goal of the workshop was to help supervisors feel more at ease with a workplace that is increasingly diverse by creating a comfortable space for the discussion of the challenges they sometimes encounter. Thirty-six supervisors from across the college have participated. Human resources can now organize similar such events, without the need of external facilitators. Professor C. Dole asked Provost Uvin if these

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workshops were specifically about issues of race and racism. Provost Uvin responded that they were not specifically about racism, but about inclusive workplaces more generally.

Concluding, Provost Uvin explained that “Amherst Reflects” continues to be a very interesting tool to create spaces for students and staff to talk to each other about their lives in an atmosphere of respect, openness, and mutual learning. About 115 members of the community participated in ten sessions led by twenty facilitators. About one-third of the participants were staff and two-thirds students; a few faculty members also engaged both as facilitators and participants. Looking ahead, Provost Uvin said that he is considering proposing to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty a program that would involve a series of faculty discussions that would be similar to the supervisor workshop that he had described. Faculty members would come together and talk about matters of inclusive pedagogy in their classes, departments, and offices.

Professor C. Dole thanked the provost for this helpful summary. He said that he had raised the issue of follow-up on the day of dialogue after conversations with students who expressed concern that the initial promise of the day of dialogue has not been realized. They had expected that more conversations and programs (e.g., films, lectures, panels, discussions) would be offered to build on the conversation that had begun on the day of dialogue. Professor C. Dole also recalled that the committee had discussed additional ways to address these issues within the curriculum, perhaps through encouraging faculty to incorporate more material about race and racism in their courses. Professor C. Dole wondered if any such initiatives have been developed. Professor Courtright suggested that discussion of this idea could take place in the workshop that is offered each year to teachers of first-year seminars. This would seem like an ideal space to talk with colleagues about incorporating questions of race into their seminars in fruitful ways. In regard to programming, Provost Uvin noted that the diversity staff is preparing a series of compelling events for the next academic year, which will be designed to bring communities together for deep discussion and learning. It is his aim, he said, to offer a full semester’s worth of programs by the time students return to campus.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Corrales suggested that it would be worthwhile to take advantage of the model that has been used so effectively for Title IX training for faculty—holding training during pre-scheduled department meetings. In addition, Professor Corrales said that making use of real-life scenarios would be most effective, in his view. Professor Courtright suggested that Provost Uvin meet with the representatives from Black Lives Matters who had spoken with the Committee of Six to request the day of dialogue. She said that it would be helpful to communicate the many ways in which the provost has been building the necessary infrastructure to continue these important conversations. The provost agreed that it would be useful to meet with the students. Professor Corrales suggested that it would be helpful to send out to the community a “where-we-are” statement that could list steps that have been taken in regard to addressing issues of race and racism. A similar document that had been distributed about steps taken by the college to address sexual misconduct had a positive impact, he noted. Concluding the conversation, Professor C. Dole commented that he had recently reviewed the responses to the survey that the dean had sent to solicit the faculty’s opinions about whether to hold a day of dialogue. Many of the responses contained excellent ideas about ways to address issues of race and racism on campus, and he suggested the proposals be reviewed, with efforts made to implement some of them. He added that he is concerned about how much of the work described by the provost remains largely invisible to the Amherst community. As important as this work is, he worries that this limited visibility runs the risk of confirming in students that the college is not serious about these issues.

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Continuing with “Questions from Committee Members,” Professor Douglas said that he is interested in learning the degree to which students are receiving close attention to writing in their first-year seminars, since a writing requirement for these courses is now in place. Dean Epstein said that she would contact Professors Gentzler and Dole to see if any analysis in this realm is planned or under way. The members then turned briefly to a personnel matter.

Conversation turned to a letter sent to the committee from a group of students who wrote to express their concerns about the ways in which some of Amherst’s policies fail to accommodate students with “alternate functionalities.” Dean Epstein said that plans are now under way for a working group made up of faculty and administrators to explore in a comprehensive way the issues raised—including examining the catalog language about course requirements. The working group will be asked to report its findings to the Committee of Six in the fall, and any proposals that emerge that touch on areas within the purview of the faculty will be brought to the faculty for discussion and a vote. The committee agreed that this plan made sense.

Dean Epstein next reported on a meeting that she had had with the College Council the previous week. In regard to the proposal to adopt a statement on academic freedom, and the draft provided, the College Council had suggested that the draft be discussed in conjunction with the College Council’s review of the [honor code](#), which should occur every four years and which is on the docket for the next academic year. The College Council wondered about the relationship between the honor code, which comprises four statements (the Statement of Intellectual Responsibility, the Statement of Respect for Persons, the Statement of Freedom of Expression and Dissent, and the Statement of Student Rights), and any statement of academic freedom that might be adopted. Professor Marshall noted that the college has traditionally placed statements about academic freedom within a larger context. While touching most directly upon and being of particular importance to faculty, a statement about academic freedom should not just be for faculty, he commented. Dean Epstein said that the students on the College Council are interested in having more conversation about the draft statement on academic freedom, and she noted that the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) has not yet weighed in on the proposal. It is her hope that the CEP will offer its views this year, and that the College Council will make a recommendation about the draft statement to the Committee of Six in the next academic year.

Continuing the conversation, President Martin wondered if there might be tension between the honor code and any statement of academic freedom. Would one supersede the other? It was agreed that, as requested by the College Council, time should be allotted for students to vet the proposed statement and to engage in conversation about it. If for any reason the College Council does not make a recommendation to bring the statement to the faculty as part of a consideration of the honor code, another entity certainly could, the members noted. The dean commented that the College Council had raised the question of how a statement on academic freedom might be integrated into the honor code, whether it should be, and where the statement, if adopted, should reside online. It was agreed that the committee should await the feedback of the College Council and the CEP before considering this issue in the next academic year.

The dean next reported on the College Council’s response to the Committee of Six’s proposal to revise the charge of the College Council. In the description below, text in red represents the changes to the charge proposed by the Committee of Six and shared with the College Council; text in blue represents changes suggested by the College Council; and strike-

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outs to text in blue represent the Committee of Six's changes to the College Council's suggestions (based on the discussion at today's meeting).

**e. The College Council.** The College Council is composed of three members of the faculty, ~~two~~ ~~or~~ three members of the administration, and five students. The faculty members of the College Council are nominated by the Committee of Six and elected at large by the faculty. They serve for two-year terms. **ONE OR** Two members of the College Council will normally be elected each year, so that the terms will overlap. The **CHIEF STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICER AND THE** Dean of Students serves ~~on~~ the Council, *ex officio*, without vote. **THE ASSISTANT DEAN OF STUDENTS/DIRECTOR OF STUDENT LIFE ALSO SERVES ON THE COMMITTEE.** ~~One or two other members of the Dean of Students' Office are appointed annually by the President.~~ Of the five students, ~~FOUR ARE ASSOCIATION OF AMHERST STUDENTS (AAS) SENATORS. EACH OF THE SENATORS REPRESENTS A DIFFERENT CLASS, WITH ALL FOUR CLASSES (FIRST-YEAR, SOPHOMORE, JUNIOR, AND SENIOR) REPRESENTED.~~ three are members-at-large from the ~~freshman~~ **FIRST-YEAR**, sophomore and junior class elected each spring to serve throughout the following academic year. The president of the Student Government **AAS** serves *ex officio*, without vote, during the academic year. ~~At the end of the first semester, the freshman class elects a representative to serve during the following two semesters.~~

The chair of the College Council is one of the three faculty members nominated for that post by the Committee of Six and elected specifically as chair by the faculty for a one-year term. ~~EACH YEAR, THE COMMITTEE CHOOSES ITS OWN CHAIR FROM AMONG ITS THREE FACULTY MEMBERS.~~

Subject to the reserved powers of the president and the Board of Trustees, the College Council is the body **PRINCIPALLY CONCERNED WITH MATTERS PERTAINING TO CAMPUS LIFE. IN ADDITION TO ITS BROAD ADVISORY ROLE IN ISSUES INVOLVING THE JOINT INTERESTS OF STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATION, THE COLLEGE COUNCIL IS SPECIFICALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING FOR STUDENT RESIDENTIAL AND SOCIAL LIFE, AND FOR ENCOURAGING FACULTY ENGAGEMENT IN STUDENT LIFE. THE COLLEGE COUNCIL IS ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEWING, AT LEAST EVERY FOURTH ACADEMIC YEAR, THE AMHERST COLLEGE HONOR CODE, AND FOR PROPOSING, IF IT SEES FIT, A NEW HONOR CODE TO THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY.** ~~to approve and determine policy in three areas: extracurricular Faculty-student relations, the review of recommendations involving the Statement of Intellectual Responsibility, and social regulations for student residential and social life.~~

~~In addition, the College Council possesses power to make recommendations concerning a wide range of subjects that touch the joint interests of students, Faculty and Administration. The College Council will not act as a review board to make decisions or recommendations in individual cases involving academic requirements and standards for granting degrees or involving the implementation of such academic requirements and standards. The College Council will not discuss and will not make recommendations to any group on particular personnel decisions in the Faculty or Administration.~~

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As reflected in the language above, the committee expressed concern with the College Council's proposal that the Association of Amherst Students (AAS) assume positions currently reserved for students at-large. The current charge suggests four at-large seats and one AAS seat (although not actually specified as such), and the AAS president, *ex officio*. The committee expressed the view that, if the College Council wants to change which students are eligible to serve on the council, the AAS should be asked to develop a proposal and to have the student body vote on it. Thereafter, the new charge would be brought to the Committee of Six, and then to the faculty for a vote as part of the consideration of the proposed revisions to the charge. Given the relatively few faculty members on the College Council, the committee also raised concerns about the College Council's proposal that that it select its own chair. The members decided that, for now, the current language about the process for choosing the chair should be retained in the revised version of the charge.

Conversation turned briefly to the proposal for academic calendars for the 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019 academic years. Professor Marshall asked if it is envisioned that faculty, if they wish, can offer an additional required class meeting during the reading period, if the period is extended with unused make-up days. He said that he worries about the possibility of some faculty, in effect, extending the duration of the semester in this manner. Professor Corrales expressed the view that it would be desirable to have this option if doing so would eliminate the need to have make-up days at night or on weekends. The dean commented that the calendars being proposed enhance flexibility. The members next reviewed a draft agenda for a faculty meeting on May 5 and voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward the agenda to the faculty.

Dean Epstein asked the members for their views about the current policy of allowing untenured faculty members to be eligible to serve on the Committee of Six, as outlined in the *Faculty Handbook* ([Section IV., S., a.](#)). While untenured faculty members have rarely been elected to the committee in recent times, the possibility remains under the rules. Due to recent hiring, there are now many more untenured professors on the Committee of Six ballot, the dean noted. When voting, it has become necessary to spend a great deal of time sorting through names on the ballot and looking up titles, in order to avoid inadvertently selecting an untenured colleague. Professor Marshall said that, while he agrees in principle that it would be best that untenured faculty members not serve on the Committee of Six, he noted that in the past, when untenured faculty were elected, there were reasons that this occurred. For example, at time when some highly respected untenured women faculty were elected, there were not many women on the faculty; there was a sense that women were not a part of faculty governance and that their voices were not being heard. The members agreed that the possibility of electing untenured faculty members, possibly from groups that might be underrepresented and/or who feel that their voices are not being heard, should not be foreclosed. It was suggested that, as an alternative to Committee of Six service, perhaps, untenured faculty could serve on a new committee that would be created to represent their interests. Professor Nelson had proposed at the last faculty meeting that such a committee be constituted. Professor Kingston expressed support for Professor Nelson's proposal, but also expressed the view that having untenured professors on the Committee of Six ballot is important, because it emphasizes that the Committee of Six is elected by and represents the interests of the faculty as a whole, not just tenured faculty. Dean Epstein wondered if having the names of assistant professors on the ballot, but not voting to elect them, could breed cynicism. The committee expressed the strong view that having all colleagues feel included is important. The dean commented that the committee had made strong arguments for

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maintaining the current system of having untenured faculty members on the Committee of Six ballot.

Continuing the conversation about the Committee of Six ballot but turning to logistics, Professor Corrales suggested that, rather than listing the names on the ballot in alphabetical order, they should be listed in a random order. He noted that research has suggested that voters may tend to vote for the names at the top of the ballot list, i.e., those at the beginning of the alphabet, rather than reading through all the names. The members agreed that Professor Corrales's proposal should be implemented. In addition, it was agreed that the titles of individuals should be included on the ballot (e.g., assistant professor of biology). Some members also felt that it would be valuable to have links from faculty members' names to their profile pages. The dean agreed to have her office work with the Department of Information Technology to try to implement these suggestions. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to committee nominations.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended May 12, 2015**

The twenty-second meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin in the president's office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, May 4, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The provost did not attend the first part of the meeting, during which President Martin discussed the transition in the provost position and ways in which his responsibilities (diversity, internationalization, institutional research and planning, reaccreditation, the Center for Community Engagement) might be redistributed in the short term, as President Martin gives more thought to the administrative structures and reporting lines that might be put in place on a permanent basis. The president had announced earlier in the day that Provost Uvin will assume the position of vice-president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Claremont-McKenna College. President Martin and the members discussed whether it would be fruitful to search for a successor to Provost Uvin or to re-imagine the position. It was agreed that the current position did not evolve to have an academic portfolio or sufficient authority to be as effective as it might have been. There remains a need for an experienced administrator to support the president in moving administrative matters forward and to addressing issues that arise—a troubleshooter of sorts. The president commented that the need for a person in this role would become even more important as she begins to travel for the college to raise funds during the capital campaign. The hope would be that the individual would enable the president to spend less time on details and more on big-picture thinking. While the areas that report to the provost can be shifted to other areas within the college, many to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty, it will be important to hire a chief diversity officer right away, President Martin said. The provost has been serving in that role. President Martin said that Mariana Cruz, assistant to the provost for diversity initiatives and director of the Multicultural Resource Center, has agreed to serve as the interim chief diversity officer for one year. A search will be launched for a permanent chief diversity officer, or the equivalent, the president informed the members. The committee expressed enthusiasm for creating an alternative position that would support the work of the president, rather than seeking to appoint another provost. At the conclusion of this conversation, Provost Uvin joined the meeting.

Under "Topics of the Day," the dean informed the committee that members of the First-Year Seminar Committee had responded to Professor Douglas's query of the previous week about the degree to which students are receiving close attention to writing in first-year seminars. She has been told that plans are under way for the committee to consult with Hanna Spinosa, director of institutional research, to think about ways to learn more about first-year seminar students' progress in the area of writing, as well as critical thinking and argument in speech—all of which are required elements of the seminars. The members agreed that the workshop that is offered for teachers of first-year seminars should convey the pedagogical expectations for these courses, which have been voted by the faculty. Dean Epstein agreed to speak with the organizers of the seminar to convey the committee's comments.

Dean Epstein next informed the members that the College Council would like to make further changes to the revised charge for the committee that has been proposed by the Committee of Six; thus, a new charge will not be brought to the faculty for a vote until the fall. The procedure for selecting student members of the committee raised particular concerns among the current student members of the College Council, the dean commented. They would prefer that the Association of Amherst Students (AAS) select the members, rather than having the student

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body vote on mechanisms for doing so. Dean Epstein said that next year's Committee of Six would consider the College Council's recommendation when it is forwarded.

Turning to the topic of constituting a curriculum committee, the dean shared some suggestions of faculty who might serve and asked the members for their ideas. She said that she anticipates that there will be two representatives from the sciences, one from the social sciences, one from foreign languages, one from the arts, and one from the humanities. The members noted that Professor Sinos, in a letter to the committee had raised the question of why the dean envisions that the committee will largely be made up of full professors who have been promoted to that rank relatively recently and associate professors. Referencing the Committee of Six minutes of April 13, 2015 (Professor Sinos referenced the minutes of April 17, but the discussion occurred in the minutes of April 13), she noted that the dean had said that plans call for the committee to be composed largely of faculty, which Professor Sinos argues would not be the case if the committee were to be composed of six faculty members, two students and two staff members, and the dean of the faculty and director of institutional research, ex officio.

Professor Sinos wrote that she wonders why full professors "who have held the rank longer than recently are excluded from consideration." Dean Epstein responded that, while there certainly could be a more senior full professor on the committee, the rationale for having faculty newer to the college is that they will be the ones teaching within the curriculum that is chosen. Professor Douglas suggested that the work of the committee would be so significant that those who serve should receive a course release. The dean said that she would consider this proposal. The members agreed to think about potential members of the curriculum committee over the next week and to return to the matter at their next meeting.

The dean then consulted with the members about the need to bring a motion to the faculty to remove from section IV of the course catalog [the current language under "course requirements" regarding petitioning to enroll in three courses per semester](#) for reasons of disability. Dean Epstein explained that this language does not meet legal requirements, and that plans call for drafting new language, on which the faculty will be asked to vote in the fall. The committee agreed that the motion to remove the language should be brought to the faculty for a vote at the commencement faculty meeting.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Courtright asked if the Committee on the Place of Athletics at Amherst will be considering issues surrounding club sports at the college. She expressed some concern that club sports are not being supported adequately, in particular, raising questions about reliable and regular access to field space for practice, a minimum requirement for any sport. President Martin responded that the committee is examining all aspects of athletics at Amherst. Dean Epstein commented that Mr. Faulstick, director of athletics, is aware that club sports are in need of more attention, and said that he plans to address this matter.

Professor Marshall next inquired about an email that the dean had sent to academic department chairs earlier in the day about the need for departments to check with the Office of Student Affairs before hiring graduating seniors for positions, for example as "green deans." Student Affairs will check its records to ensure that proposed student-employees do not have a record of a Title IX or other serious disciplinary violations, the dean noted. If a student has a record, the hiring department will be informed. Professor Marshall asked if the same procedure should be followed when hiring a post-bac student to work in a lab and/or student-researchers. The dean said that these same procedures should be used. Professor Marshall wondered if a student with a record could potentially be denied the opportunity to work in a lab prior to his or her senior year. It was noted that working in a lab is the common practice when a student

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embarks on an honors thesis in chemistry. Not allowing the student to do so would amount to denying the student an academic opportunity.

In response, President Martin said that decisions about whether a student with a disciplinary violation should be employed would depend on the work envisioned and the nature of the violation. Every effort should be made not to deny students academic opportunities, but, again, the nature of the violations should be considered, and the faculty member would be responsible for overseeing the student. Professor Douglas asked if there is now a policy in place that students with disciplinary records automatically cannot be hired by the college. Professor Corrales wondered whether there is any possibility of recognizing that a student has made a mistake, while offering opportunities for redemption. President Martin said that the “mistakes” in question would not be minor infractions, but very serious matters. The committee asked if a faculty member would be given the details about the violation if Student Affairs informs him or her that a potential student-employee has a record of a disciplinary infraction. It was agreed that the best procedure would be to ask Student Affairs whether, given the nature of what the office knows, it would be a good idea to hire the student. The decision not to hire a student, which is within the discretion of the college, would not be made lightly. A violation would need to be of a serious nature. Dean Epstein noted that the college’s legal counsel has informed her that it will likely become necessary to check for Title IX and other disciplinary violations when hiring all students, not just graduating seniors. She asked the members if their departments checked references when hiring faculty. It was noted that some departments call references and others don’t. Several members noted, however, that departments regularly gather letters of recommendation for candidates. The dean said that she feels that it is important to check whether faculty under consideration for positions have criminal records and to do degree checks as well. Dean Epstein noted that, if this procedure is followed for new faculty, the same steps should be taken for current faculty, and for current staff and individuals under consideration for staff positions, according to the college’s legal counsel. Professor Douglas said that it would be important to ensure that any companies that are engaged in doing the checks are reliable, in order to avoid someone being cast as a false positive, which could be devastating to a person's career. In expressing concerns about conducting such checks, he noted that it would be crucial that the college make clear exactly what it was looking for and what it would do if the search generated evidence of past violations or convictions. The dean said that, while a record of parking tickets may be acceptable, violations of a serious kind would prevent the college from hiring a new faculty member or staff member, for example. Professor Douglas reiterated his general unease, particularly if the college did not have a clear sense of what it was looking for or a clear sense of what it would do with whatever evidence of past violations that it uncovered. Professor C. Dole shared Professor Douglas’s concerns and, noting that there are organizations that purposefully refuse to have background checks completed on their employees, suggested that the value of such a policy should not be taken for granted. President Martin said that doing these kinds of checks is a matter of institutional accountability, and agreed that a thoughtful approach to repercussions would be necessary at every level. The dean said that she would continue discussions about these checks and seek the advice of the college’s legal counsel.

The members then discussed press coverage of Amherst agreeing to partner with Harvard Business School’s online digital education initiative, in order to provide Amherst students with additional access to summer courses online, for which no academic credit will be given. The president and the dean said that they had been unaware of the agreement until the announcement appeared. President Martin said that she will ensure that the senior staff and Committee of Six are informed before such agreements about institutional partnerships are concluded and

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announced in the future. It was agreed that the quality of the reporting and writing about the partnership in one particular article that had appeared online was extremely poor, and that the portrayal of the liberal arts was insulting and deeply ignorant. President Martin said that the partnership will allow spaces in the courses to be reserved for Amherst students. In addition, Amherst students, who have participated in this program in the past and who have found it to be valuable, will now be eligible to receive financial aid from Harvard.

The committee 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 committee also approved a nominee for a McCloy Professorship who had been recommended by two faculty members.

Discussion turned briefly to a letter that had been sent to the committee by a group of faculty, who wrote to express concerns about the future of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE). President Martin and Provost Uvin stressed that their goal in thinking about the ways in which the college develops and administers experiential learning programs, including community engagement programs, is and has been to explore ways to share the strengths of the center more broadly. Provost Uvin commented that it appears to him that some of those who have been troubled by recent discussions seem to feel that simply having conversations about ways to ensure more collaboration between the center and other programs at the college implies that the CCE is lacking in some way. The provost said that this has not been the thinking of the administration, and that the goal has been to broaden the reach of the center. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to committee nominations.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty

**Amended May 19, 2015**

The twenty-third meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2014-2015 was called to order by President Martin at the president's house at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, May 11, 2015. Present were Professors Corrales, Courtright, C. Dole, Douglas, Kingston, and Marshall; Dean Epstein; Provost Uvin; and Associate Dean Tobin, recorder.

The meeting began with the dean noting that she would like to remind individual faculty members and departments that a program of bridge appointments is being implemented in sync with the [Enhanced Phased Retirement Option](#) that is being offered to faculty until 2018. Mellon funding is available to support bridge appointments for those faculty members who enter into phased retirement at sixty-five or older (a maximum of five years to full retirement). Bridge appointments associated with younger participants in the phased retirement program can also be supported through college funds. The dean said that bridge appointments can occur in a number of ways. She will identify departments that have multiple colleagues of retirement age and invite them to apply for bridge appointments, with the option of also applying for funding to develop departmental transition plans. Dean Epstein said that she also happy to meet with individuals who express interest in the program. In addition, all departments are invited to make proposals for bridge appointments. The process for proposing and allocating bridge appointments mimics as closely as possible the college's regular FTE allocation procedures, the dean explained. Once a faculty member expresses interest in retiring on the condition that a bridge appointment is made, the person and his or her department consults with the dean and then submits a proposal for a bridge FTE/retirement plan to the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP). If the CEP makes a recommendation to the president and the dean for the bridge FTE, the dean meets with the senior faculty member. A signed retirement agreement, stating that the senior colleague's phased retirement is contingent on the president and the dean awarding the new FTE to the senior colleague's department, is requested. Once the agreement is signed, the president and the dean allocate the bridge FTE. A national search is then launched, according to the college's regular schedule and procedures. At the conclusion of her remarks, the dean reminded the members that the committee would be asked to vote electronically to forward the recommendation for the Woods-Travis Prize, since today's meeting would be the last of this academic year, and the calculation for this award depends on having all senior grades in hand. The committee then turned to a personnel matter.

The dean informed the members that the CEP has expressed concern about [the statement on academic freedom](#) that the Department of Sexuality, Women and Gender Studies (SWAGS), has developed and posted on its website. It reads as follows:

**Intellectual Freedom and Responsibility Regarding Instruction**

SWAGS courses trouble all our assumptions at some point in addressing pleasure, power, sexuality, and danger. None of these intersecting axes can usefully interrogate the world without causing consternation. We therefore recognize the need to balance academic freedom of thought and choice of material with the sensitivities of our teachers and students. It is our intent, as members of this department and various disciplines, to find the ways by which reason and intelligence can protect all of us. Given the shared centrality of our conceptual and emotional lives to the pursuit of knowledge, SWAGS will use the classroom to mediate vulnerability with rationality and fear with thought.

The members felt that this statement is in tension with [the college's statement about academic freedom](#). The committee worried that the SWAGS statement appears to qualify

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a commitment to academic freedom by suggesting that sensitivities should be taken into account and/or protected. President Martin expressed the view that a department within the college ought not operate under a definition of academic freedom that is more restrictive than the definition adopted by the college as a whole. The committee concurred and asked the dean to speak with the department about this issue. She agreed to do so.

Since it has determined that [the current language under “course requirements” regarding petitioning to enroll in three courses per semester](#) for reasons of disability does not meet legal requirements, the committee agreed that a motion to remove the policy should be brought to the faculty for a vote at the commencement faculty meeting. Plans call for drafting new language, on which the faculty will be asked to vote in the fall, the dean said. The members then voted six in favor and zero opposed on substance and six in favor and zero opposed on the following motion:

The faculty endorses the removal of the paragraph below from the course catalog, [section IV, Course Requirements, page 72](#), until such time that new language, which will bring the college into compliance with disability law, is endorsed by a vote of the faculty.

Also in exceptional cases a student may petition their class dean at the time of admission or prior to the beginning of any semester for permission to enroll in a program of three courses per semester for any number of semesters of his or her enrollment at Amherst. Such permission may be granted only for reasons of physical disability (e.g., for students who have serious visual or hearing impairments) or compelling family responsibility (e.g., for students who are parents and have custodial responsibility for their children). In such cases, the student may be granted permission to spend as many as two additional semesters at Amherst College and to graduate with no fewer than 31 courses.

Discussion turned to the issue of determining who should replace the provost in his role as the member of the administration to whom appeals of decisions made by the Committee on Discipline are directed. It was agreed that it makes the most sense for the dean of the faculty to take the place of the provost and to revise the Committee on Discipline’s charge to reflect this change. The members considered the following motion:

The Committee of Six proposes a revision (replacing the provost with the dean of the faculty) to the charge of the Committee on Discipline ([Faculty Handbook, section IV, S., 1., g.](#)), as indicated with strike-outs and bold red caps, effective June 1, 2015.

**Appeal**

Either the respondent or the complainant may appeal a decision by the Committee on Discipline, the dean of students, or the director of student conduct and community standards. All appeals are directed to the ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY**. An appeal may come forward based on the following grounds: bias shown during any part of the student conduct process; material procedural error; the inappropriateness of the sanction; or the discovery of

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substantive new evidence that was not available at the time the decision was made.

The respondent or the complainant must submit a written statement of appeal to the ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY**, which must state the grounds and reason for the appeal, within ten business days of the date of the written finding. Upon receipt of the statement of appeal, the ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY** will review the official records of the dean of students, director of student conduct and community standards, or the committee's proceeding and other materials bearing on the case as necessary. The ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY** may interview the parties to the dispute or anyone else involved in the hearing process, including the committee members.

For an appeal of a decision by the dean of students or the director of student conduct and community standards, the ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY** may refer the case to a panel of the Committee on Discipline, consisting of two faculty members, one of whom will act as chair, and one student. For an appeal of a decision by the Committee on Discipline, the ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY** may refer the case back to the original panel with instructions or may direct that the case be reviewed or reheard by a different panel of the Committee on Discipline, consisting of two faculty members, one of whom will act as chair, and one student. In the case of any such referral, the panel of the committee on discipline will report its findings and recommendations to the ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY**, who will resolve the appeal.

The ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY** will render a decision with such terms as the ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY** determines to be appropriate. The ~~provost~~ **DEAN OF THE FACULTY'S** decision is final, and no further appeal will be permitted.

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 the motion to the faculty.

The members discussed whether the dean should also replace the provost in the same role for appeals of rulings regarding violations of Title IX. It was agreed that Lisa Rutherford, chief policy officer and legal counsel, should be consulted on this question, but that it would likely be appropriate for the dean of the faculty to assume this responsibility as well. Continuing their conversation about the charge for the Committee on Discipline, the members discussed a topic raised at the faculty meeting on May 5, 2015. The faculty had discussed whether the language regarding gender specification for student members should be kept or removed. Ben Lieber, former dean of students, had explained at the faculty meeting that the language had been incorporated into the charge at a time when women students were not participating on committees at the college. It was noted that it would likely have been prudent at the time that Amherst, as an institution that adopted co-education late in its history, would require that there be women members of the committee. The committee considered whether this rationale is still

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valid. Professor Douglas, while supporting the aspiration of achieving gender balance, expressed the view that it is problematic that the charge requires gender diversity in regard to the make-up of the committee, but not other forms of diversity. He noted that there is no requirement for gender diversity in constituting a jury. He found it odd that gender balance should be required here, but not in Title IX cases, and more generally wondered whether a good rule has now outlived its original purpose.

Other members argued that, while it certainly would be best to have the make-up of the committee reflect the diversity of the college, when the committee is judging those who are accused of transgressions, achieving diversity of this breadth is impossible to accomplish. It was noted that, while one might imagine that having a stipulation that there be representatives of different genders on hearing boards that adjudicate complaints of Title IX violations, Amherst does not have this requirement. Some members noted that hearing boards are not elected bodies and are composed of professionals who are chosen solely on the basis of their expertise and experience, which seems appropriate. Other members commented that, in their experience, students, whether male or female, who have served on the Committee on Discipline take their work seriously.

Continuing the conversation, Professor Corrales noted that it is still the case that women are underrepresented in electoral processes worldwide, and that mentioning women in the charge would likely encourage women to be a part of the election for the Committee on Discipline. Professor Courtright argued that the language in the charge presents gender as a binary concept, with only two possibilities, when the contemporary view is that gender is a spectrum and more gender identities exist. The members agreed that references to “male” and “female” within the current charge were particularly problematic. Professor Courtright commented that specifying two genders would exclude students who do not identify with either gender. Other members agreed, but struggled with developing substitute language that would reflect these concepts and/or wondered whether it would be relevant and/or appropriate to address gender and gender identity within the charge of the Committee on Discipline. A quick Google search revealed that the charges of similar committees at Swarthmore, Wesleyan, and Williams do not refer to gender. President Martin commented that it is important to be respectful of the full range of gender identities, noting that these are very complex issues. She pointed out that it is also important not to forget that the category of “women” still matters as an underrepresented group, and that including women contributes to diversity in many fields. Provost Uvin commented that it will be important for the college to address these issues more broadly. He suggested leaving the current language in the charge and asking Mariana Cruz, interim chief diversity officer, and Angie Tissi-Gassoway, director of the Queer Resource Center, to make recommendations about how Amherst should address gender identity and expression in its policies and practices, and language about gender and gender identity that should be put in place for use across the college. Professor C. Dole, supporting the importance of ensuring gender diversity on the Committee on Discipline, noted that the committee seems to be struggling in its effort to imagine an electoral process that could achieve this result. He wondered whether researching how other groups or organizations have developed electoral systems that maintain gender diversity could be informative. Dean Epstein suggested that a solution might be to eliminate the language about gender specificity within the charge and to track the make-up of the committee’s membership for two or three years. Professor Courtright said that, if the language is removed, there should also be a process of reviewing whether having men and women on the committee has been important to the process of judging disciplinary cases. The committee then considered the motion that

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follows and voted two in favor, two opposed, with two abstentions, on the substance of the motion and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the motion to the faculty.

The Committee of Six proposes removing the language regarding gender specification for students that is currently within the charge of the Committee on Discipline ([Faculty Handbook, section IV, S., 1., g.](#)), as indicated with strike-outs and bold red caps, effective June 1, 2015.

**Membership on the Committee**

The committee will consist of **FOUR** ~~two male and two female~~ students and four members of the faculty. The dean of students or his or her designee will ordinarily serve as non-voting chair. The dean of students may delegate this responsibility to a faculty member who has previously served on the Committee on Discipline when the dean has supervised or been involved in an investigation of the complaint at issue. The director of student conduct and community standards or his or her designee will serve as record-keeper.

Each case will normally be heard by a panel of two faculty members and three student members. A panel may consist of one faculty member and two student members when a normal quorum is unavailable.

When any faculty member of the committee disqualifies himself or herself from hearing a case, is disqualified for a conflict of interest, or is otherwise unavailable, he or she will be replaced by a substitute appointed by the Committee of Six, if a substitution is required to maintain the quorum.

Student members of the Committee on Discipline will be chosen in an election conducted by the middle of the second semester of each academic year. The Association of Amherst Students (AAS) will oversee the following procedures:

1. The election will be conducted according to the procedures outlined in the code of elections. The ~~two men and the two women~~ **FOUR** candidates who receive the highest number of votes will be elected. If this procedure cannot be followed because of an insufficient number of candidates, then the College Council will appoint a student to any position unfilled by election.
2. If one of the elected students resigns, the AAS will appoint an alternate. ~~of the same gender.~~ In the event elected students are not available, and substitutes are required to maintain the quorum for a case, a substitute will normally be appointed by the chair of the College Council.

Student members will begin their two-year term on July 1 of the year of their election.

At the beginning of each academic year, the dean of students or designee will schedule training for all members of the Committee on Discipline. In consultation

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with the committee, the dean of students or designee may, from time to time, schedule other such training to assist the committee.

The members reviewed the charge of the Committee on Education and Athletics ([Faculty Handbook, section IV, S., 1.](#)), which stipulates that one man and one woman student serve. The members felt that, since there are men's and women's athletics teams, it makes sense for this language to remain.

*r. The Committee on Education and Athletics* (voted by the faculty, 2004). This committee is composed of the chair of the Department of Physical Education; two representatives selected by the Department of Physical Education; three members of the faculty chosen by the Committee of Six; two students (one man and one woman) elected by their peers from a slate consisting of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, and a third appointed by the Association of Amherst Students (voted by the faculty, may 2007); and the chief student affairs officer or his or her designee, ex officio. A member of the faculty chairs the committee. The president and the dean of the faculty may meet with the committee. The purpose of this committee is to advise the college on the role and place of athletics in the educational enterprise of the college.

The committee next considered some committee nominations. Returning to the topic of constituting a Curriculum Committee, the dean asked for the members' response to the draft charge for the Curriculum Committee that she had shared with the committee in advance of today's meeting. Professor Douglas wondered if thought has been given to inviting an external team to evaluate and make recommendations about the college's curricular vision. Professor Courtright expressed concern that those serving on such an external team could be predisposed toward the curricular vision of their home institutions. The president and the dean suggested that, as a platform for beginning discussion, prominent leaders in higher education could be invited to campus to have conversations with the committee and the campus community about today's intellectual landscape—focusing on new ideas, pressing issues, and directions to be considered. The members expressed enthusiasm for inviting such individuals to Amherst for this purpose. Turning to the draft charge that the dean had shared, the committee recommended that more emphasis be placed on framing broad questions. An example, according to Professor Douglas, would be to ask: how well does Amherst's curriculum foster intellectual community? Addressing this question, the members discussed the idea of considering whether there should be rigorous, shared intellectual experiences at the college—a few excellent core interdisciplinary courses that all students would be required to take. Another emphasis in the charge, it was agreed, should be to ask the committee to consider and reaffirm the value and purpose of a liberal arts education. Professor Douglas felt that the committee should take up the question of what are or should be the curricular consequences of Amherst's robust commitment to diversity? The members also expressed the view that the committee should consider whether new fields of intellectual inquiry or artistic production should be introduced into the curriculum and additional mechanisms that might be developed for doing so. The dean thanked the members for their ideas and said that she would revise the draft charge accordingly.

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The committee then discussed the structure of the committee and agreed that in selecting members to serve, a focus on gaining representation was less important than choosing members who would engage in big-picture thinking and bring an institutional perspective to their work. In addition to the seven faculty members, two students, and two staff members, the dean of the faculty and director of institutional research will serve, *ex officio*, on the committee. The committee then considered the motion below and voted six in favor and zero opposed on content and six in favor and zero opposed to forward the motion to the faculty.

That the faculty endorse the strategic plan for the college

The committee next reviewed a draft agenda for the commencement faculty meeting to be held on May 21, 2015, and voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward the agenda to the faculty. It was agreed that lunch should follow the meeting. The committee also considered a draft agenda for the Labor Day faculty meeting, and, after requesting that a report by the dean of admission and financial aid be added, voted six in favor and zero opposed to forward the agenda to the faculty. The dean said that she would invite Ms. Fretwell to give the presentation.

The members turned to a conversation about the theses and transcripts of students who had been recommended by their departments for a *summa cum laude* degree and having an overall grade point average in the top 25 percent of the graduating class. The dean noted that the committee had also been asked to review the theses of students who had received *summa cum laude* recommendations from their departments and whose overall grade point average was likely to land below the top 25 percent but within the top 40 percent of the class, since these students would qualify for a *magna cum laude* degree under the honors guidelines. After discussing the merits of the theses, the members voted unanimously to forward the recommendations to the faculty and offered high praise for the quality of the work done by this accomplished group of students. Professor Douglas, while agreeing that the theses are outstanding, commented on the “narrowness” of a great many of the students’ transcripts. The committee concurred that some of the “*summa*” transcripts were troubling in this regard, as some students had taken courses in a small number of departments. In future, the Committee of Six would like to have all *summa* recommendations and theses submitted electronically. The committee also agreed that it would be useful for next year’s Committee of Six to develop a sense, perhaps through a survey, of departmental practices, for deciding which theses to recommend for *summa*. These practices clearly vary significantly among departments, it was agreed. Some departments require that all members read the theses, while others seem to rely on the recommendations of the advisor and/or small committees. Interdisciplinary theses seem to present some challenges, as there is no department and the third member of the committee that judges them often comes late to the process. Some members of the committee thought it would be valuable for the committee to consider whether there should be a common standard for what qualifies as *summa*-level work, while noting that there would be differences among fields in regard to specifics. For example, departments might be asked to consider a series of general questions when making recommendations for *summa*—is the work original? If not a creative thesis, is the thesis well written and well argued? Is the scope of the thesis appropriate for an undergraduate honors thesis? Is the methodology sound? Professor Corrales commented that considering such rubrics might help departments make decisions about a *summa* recommendation. Professor Courtright expressed the view that the Committee of Six should consider explicitly what the standards for making a recommendation for *summa* should be. The members also discussed the possibility of having scholars from other institutions help to assess the quality of theses, especially in small

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departments, though it was thought that it would be a challenge to implement this procedure, due to scheduling and financial constraints.

Concluding the meeting, the president and the dean thanked the members and Associate Dean Tobin for their excellent work this year.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Epstein  
Dean of the Faculty