

*Committee on Academic Priorities*  
2004-2005  
Grace Armstrong *Convenor*  
Azade Seyhan  
Kim Cassidy  
Elizabeth McCormack  
Jim Martin

# B R Y N M A W R

June 10, 2005

## **ADDENDUM TO THE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GENERAL FACULTY 2004-2005**

### **Under Strategic Planning**

#### *Sabbatical Leave Program*

Over the course of the year, CAP obtained information about the new sabbatical program from the following sources: a special meeting of the general faculty, smaller meetings with junior faculty and continuing non-tenure track faculty (CNNT), individual emails, and a faculty-wide survey (see CAP's Blackboard site [to which all faculty have access] for a complete summary of this survey). CAP sees the assessment of this new program as a multi-year process. While some impacts of this program are quite obvious at this point, others may become clear only over longer periods of time.

Tenure track (TT) faculty perceive the new program as having a very positive impact on the quality of their scholarship, productivity, teaching and overall morale. Junior faculty seem to be the most positive about the new program, with several of them reporting that it was a major reason that they chose to come to the College. While the global perception of the program is quite positive, TT faculty feel, however, that the program has had a negative impact on their departmental planning, on faculty service to the department and to the College, and on students in their major. TT faculty were especially concerned about the overall replacement level of colleagues on leave as well as the impact of interim replacements (particularly when only single courses are replaced) on curricular continuity for students and on departmental service, e.g., advising and senior thesis supervision. It has also become clear that despite efforts to make the faculty more aware of the details of the program, some do not seem to understand that they have the option to wait and take a full year's sabbatical after twelve semesters of teaching.

In contrast to the overall positive reaction of the TT faculty, CNNT faculty feel negatively affected by the program. In part, these negative reactions stem from a perceived lack of consultation with them at the time of the program's creation and from the large disparity that the new program has created between the leave schedule for CNNT faculty versus TT faculty. In addition, because CNNT faculty take their leaves less frequently, they must often assume, in addition to their normal responsibilities, the greater burden of leave replacement work for their TT colleagues on sabbatical, i.e. plugging the curricular gaps, advising and supervising students, and training the interim replacements.

At this point, CAP believes that the sabbatical program has great potential for a positive impact but that better support of it is critical for the program's success. When the program was instituted, it was difficult to foresee the various effects that Tenured faculty's more frequent absences would have on academic programs and academic planning. Furthermore, six of the spanning positions that were intended to staff against more frequent leaves will still not be in place by the end of AY 2005-2006. Now that we are beginning to live with the program, CAP has several initial reactions. First, we consider it essential to provide better replacement for those who are on leave. While interim appointments will probably always be necessary, such short-term appointments are quite problematic, because these individuals do not, even in the

optimal scenario, take on the important work of departmental service. Thus, CAP recommends that support of the new leave program -- particularly the spanning positions and other new positions created to help staff against leaves -- be considered a major priority that should be funded by the ongoing campaign. If the College cannot staff more effectively against leaves by hiring permanent or longer-term faculty, the new program could have quite negative effects on students, on the curriculum, and even on the faculty who stay behind. For example, the increased amount of work the latter shoulder when they are not on leave may cancel out the increased productivity made possible by more frequent sabbaticals. Second, while some departments report very positively about their planning process, CAP concludes that others may need support to plan for leaves, particularly in coordination with other departments and with their Bi-College counterparts.

Finally, CAP believes that the concerns of the CNTT faculty must be addressed. While the sabbatical leave program is only one of a number of issues for CNTT faculty (see below), the negative impact that the new program has had on them is a cause for serious concern. The following may help to ease these adverse effects: more regular communication between CNTT faculty and the administration regarding the evolving impact of the program on the former, altering the program to include CNTT faculty or, at a minimum, to bring the schedules for leave of TT and CNTT faculty into closer alignment, and more support to help CNTT faculty cope with the increased burden that the new program places on them.

#### *Continuing Non-Tenure Track (CNTT) Faculty*

After CAP included CNTT faculty in the aforementioned Sabbatical Leave Program Survey, a few CNTT faculty took advantage of the opportunity to e-mail CAP members and highlight issues raised in the survey. A few CNTT faculty also spoke to members of CAP in person about their concerns.

In order to pursue this important dialogue, CAP invited all CNTT faculty to meet with us in a focused group format. Eleven CNTT faculty participated in this May 4th, 2005 discussion. The participants occupy different ranks in the CNTT cohort and represent numerous College departments. Approximately half of the participants have been employed at Bryn Mawr College more than ten years. More than half of the participants hold the rank of Senior Lecturer. A couple of CNTT faculty also e-mailed CAP members to restate and/or pursue points made during the focus group meeting. In all of these communications, the CNTT faculty were candid and thoughtful. Their concerns focused on the following: workload and compensation, recognition and respect, and opportunities for professional development and advancement.

In each of these domains there was general (if not universal) agreement among CNTT faculty that they often feel treated as "second-class citizens" of the College. Many of their concerns appear to represent long-standing issues that have been recently highlighted and/or exacerbated by their negative perceptions of the process used to establish and implement the revised Sabbatical Leave Program. For example, a number of CNTT faculty were concerned by the apparent view at the College that CNTT positions are exclusively teaching and service positions and that research (other than in pedagogy) is not a legitimate professional component of this role. This issue comes to the fore in professional development leaves provided to CNTT faculty who hold the rank of "Senior Lecturer" and who are expected to engage only in professional pedagogical research. In addition, quite a few CNTT faculty expressed concerns about what they perceive as low salaries and the apparent lack of Administration efforts to address this issue. Finally, there is general agreement among these faculty that there is no path at Bryn Mawr for real career advancement for the CNTT cohort. In this regard there was group discussion of the equivalent of CNTT appointments at Haverford College and great consensus that CNTT faculty at Haverford, who hold appointments as ranked faculty without tenure, receive more respect and hold a higher status in the faculty.

CAP notes with interest that a number of CNTT faculty publicly or privately thanked us for expressing an interest in their concerns and for making time to meet with them. We will continue to do so regularly, just as we do with other identified faculty cohorts.

In addition to recommendations concerning CNTT faculty under the preceding rubric *Sabbatical Leave Program*, CAP recommends that:

- The Administration directly acknowledge and address CNTT faculty's issues in all faculty policy and program discussions and decisions, including salary and benefits issues and professional development initiatives.
- The scope of research activities supported by the CNTT leaves be broadened to include scholarly as well as "professional development" proposals.
- The Committee on Appointments consider a new ranking and title for CNTT appointments that better convey appropriate recognition and respect for these members of the faculty.

Under **Requests for new continuing positions:**

*Peace and Conflict Studies*

The PACS Program has submitted a proposal to CAP to create a full-time TT position in Peace and Conflict Studies with a specialization in the Middle East. The proposal is to search at the Assistant Professor level for a faculty member in anthropology, political science, psychology or sociology to strengthen Bryn Mawr's contribution to the BiCollege Peace and Conflict Studies concentration. The emphasis on the Middle East would enrich our current offerings concerning the study of a crucial part of the world that is underrepresented in our curriculum and could further contribute courses to the International Studies minor. The position also has the potential to increase offerings in the highly enrolled social sciences. The proposal, originally submitted in the fall, has circulated among social science faculty and was brought back to CAP in a rewritten version.

CAP recognizes the need addressed by this proposal to buttress the PACS curriculum and to enhance course offerings in the Middle East. We therefore recommend that the current .5 FTE contributed by Bryn Mawr to the BiCollege PACS program be enhanced by an additional .5 FTE for at least a three-year period. Important conversations about the future of the BiCollege PACS program were resumed at the recent TCCAC meeting of May 12 and are ongoing. In addition, a number of faculty with research and teaching interests in the Middle East are engaged in discussions about ways to enhance curricular offerings in the Middle East. These initiatives will, in turn, be affected by the recent hire at Bryn Mawr of a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Cultures and Societies of the Middle East, by the presence of a visiting Middle Eastern scholar in 2005-2006, and by the projected hire in 2005-2006 of the Arabic language specialist under the Mellon-funded Tri-College Islamic/Middle Eastern Studies Initiative. Given the ongoing discussions of the direction of the PACS program across the two colleges and the new and emerging opportunities to mold the future direction of Middle East studies to which this PACS position would also contribute, CAP recommends at this time that the FTE position be conceived as a three-year Visiting position (at the rank of Assistant Professor).

*Semitic Languages (Hebrew and Judaic Studies)*

A group of TriCollege faculty has brought a proposal for a CNTT in Semitic languages at Bryn Mawr in response to a retirement. As now configured, the position would focus on Hebrew and Judaic Studies. The CNTT would assume the usual language pedagogue's responsibilities; s/he would teach the year-long Elementary Hebrew sequence, Intermediate Hebrew (one semester in Modern and one semester in Biblical language), and a further course that would alternate annually between, e.g., texts in translation in a Judaic Studies course, a C-Sem with a Judaic Studies focus, or a course in Akkadian.

CAP believes that the ideal long-term solution to the teaching of Semitic languages is a CNTT position. Given the ongoing, already productive discussions about enhancing the Middle East presence and the possibilities for interesting contributions from the three Colleges (see above), we recommend at the very least for the short term a three-year continuing position in Semitic Languages. Such a hire would allow Bryn Mawr to assume its traditional leadership in language/culture study that will be so crucial to supporting Middle East area studies, in conjunction with the independent TriCollege Arabic/Islamic Initiative. With the strengthening of Middle East area studies and their increased visibility, we expect student enrollments in Modern and Biblical Hebrew to increase and to justify the long-term investment of a CNTT position. We further recommend, in the absence of a home program, that the new faculty member be mentored by a team of two professors, one a CNTT in modern languages and one from Classics.

