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B R Y N M A W R

27 July 2009

Jim Martin, Chair of the Committee on Academic Priorities
Francis Higginson
Michael Noel
Stephen Salkever
Anjali Thapar
Michael Tratner

Dear Jim and other members of the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP):

Thank you for your hard work this year, for your careful review of faculty position requests, and for your contributions to many ongoing efforts to sustain and strengthen the rich intellectual life of the College. I appreciate the time and energy that each of you devoted to the Committee's work, as do your faculty colleagues and the Board of Trustees. This letter constitutes my formal response to CAP's Annual Report and Addendum Report to the Faculty, AY 2008-2009.

Recommendations for Faculty Searches

I commend CAP for establishing principles for review of position requests that highlight the importance of long-range planning and of consultation and collaboration with departments at Bryn Mawr. I also offer my strong endorsement of CAP's statement on diversity and of its plans to work with departments and the Committee on Appointments to maximize the number of candidates from underrepresented groups. I look forward to seeing the documentation that CAP assembles of departmental efforts to create position definitions that maximize the number of underrepresented minorities, particularly scholars of color, in the candidate pool. Of those candidates who completed EEO cards in 2008-2009, 20.2% described themselves as Asian, 5.2% described themselves as Hispanic and 4.2% described themselves as African American or multiracial. I hope that we can build the diversity of both our candidate pools and our appointments in 2009-2010.

I approve CAP's recommendation to conduct tenure-track searches in Classics, Economics and History of Art in AY 2009-2010, and to renew a tenure-track search in Economics that was not successful in AY 2008-2009. The three departments are authorized to launch these searches in a timely manner, but should be cautioned that my approval is subject to confirmation of the College's FY10 budget at the October 2009 Board of Trustees meeting. The Board delayed its final approval of the FY10 budget until its October meeting as a matter of fiscal prudence, given the global economic volatility of the past year. I will thus confirm budgetary approval of these searches after 3 October 2009.

CAP also requested my endorsement of a long-term reduction of three tenure-track faculty lines, one in Classics and two in the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research, as recommended by the Task Force on Balancing the College's Mission and Resources.

- In its review of the tenure-track position request made by Classics this year, CAP had opportunities to review data that informed the Task Force's recommendation to reduce the number of faculty in Classics and to consult with the Provost and department members about staffing plans for a sound program that could operate successfully with the equivalent of four FTE tenure-track faculty. I support CAP's decision to authorize a search for a tenure-track Hellenist in 2009-2010, its recommendation that the department begin operating at a staffing level of four FTE in 2009-2010, and the long-term reduction of one faculty member in Classics. I also join CAP in urging comprehensive planning within the Graduate Group (and with other allied departments, such as History) to provide appropriate staffing for undergraduate and graduate courses in Classics as we move forward with this new plan.
- The prescience of the Task Force's recommendations on the future size and scope of the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research (GSSWSR) was highlighted by enrollment shortfalls at the School in 2008-2009. I am encouraged by the work begun in the second semester by the Provost, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Acting Director of the School to work with the School's faculty to design a compelling graduate curriculum that could be offered by a smaller tenure-track faculty. I endorse the long-term reduction of two tenure-track faculty at the School to achieve a faculty of 10 tenure-track FTE. I appreciate CAP's commitment to supporting the new Dean and the School as a whole as they establish this curriculum and address other recommendations of the Task Force.

Other Issues Addressed by CAP in 2008-2009

Curriculum Renewal Working Group (CRWG)

In creating and providing leadership to the CRWG, CAP and the Curriculum Committee have launched an important effort to refocus the mission of liberal arts education at Bryn Mawr in the early 21st century and to translate that mission into a set of curricular offerings that will be compelling to faculty and to prospective and current students. Inclusion of additional faculty in this work through their participation in subgroups examining specific topics promises a stronger set of recommendations and broader support for these proposals. I am pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to the subgroup on globalization in the fall.

Completion of the CRWG's work will raise questions about the size and composition of the faculty required to deliver this new curriculum to our students. I look forward to working with CAP, the faculty as a whole, the Board, and other senior members of the administration in this future institutional planning initiative.

Globalization

Our consideration of a possible campus in Abu Dhabi allowed the College to explore the opportunities and challenges created by extending Bryn Mawr's mission beyond our current campus. To broaden our sense of the possibilities of developing our global connections, I invited several leaders of global initiatives in higher education to meet with the faculty in the spring semester, including Hoon Eng Khoo, Provost and Vice Chancellor of the Asian University for Women; Susan Buck Sutton '69, Associate Vice Chancellor for International Affairs at Indiana University/Purdue University-Indianapolis and Associate Vice President for International Affairs for the Indiana University system; Susan Gillespie, Vice President for Special Global Initiatives at Bard College; and Patricia O'Connor, a Georgetown University English professor who was a member of the founding faculty of Georgetown's School of Foreign Service in Doha, Qatar. This month I asked Associate Professor of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology Peter Magee to work with me in the coming year as a special assistant to the president for international educational initiatives to assist in our continuing exploration of global partnerships. I look forward to a conversation in the early fall with CAP and Professor Magee about how we might best engage members of the Bryn Mawr community in discussions of how the College could contribute to and lead global efforts to extend higher education to women, and the benefits and possible risks of such efforts.

Bi-College Cooperation

The Provost joins me in expressing our appreciation of CAP's endorsement of the temporary merger of the Bryn Mawr and Haverford German Departments. The provosts will work with the German faculty of the two colleges to support their long-term planning efforts.

I concur with CAP's observation that earlier sharing of academic plans between Bryn Mawr and Haverford is beneficial. In 2008-2009, for example, such information allowed the provosts to identify faculty from each college who might teach at the other institution to meet staffing needs created by faculty sabbaticals. Kim Cassidy and I will continue to promote timely exchange of faculty staffing information with our Haverford counterparts. I am pleased that CAP has had productive conversations with its counterpart committees at Haverford (EPC and FCAE), and I support your efforts to continue and extend this collaboration.

Graduate Education

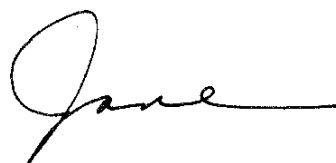
CAP plays an ongoing and valuable role in supporting the Provost and the Dean of Graduate Studies in their efforts to work with graduate programs to implement recommendations of the Task Force on Balancing the College's Mission and Resources. The Provost, the Dean and I share concerns noted in CAP's annual report about efforts to date to achieve greater integration across graduate programs and between graduate and undergraduate education. We look forward to working with CAP to achieve progress on these integration goals.

Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- Departmental Status for the Computer Science and Growth and Structure of Cities Programs. I endorse the re-designation of these two vibrant programs as departments.
- Post-Baccalaureate Premedical Program. The Provost continues her work to analyze the costs of the post-bacc program and the possibility of expanding the post-bacc program by 5-10 students to increase this revenue stream. Earlier this month, the College received information on changes in medical school admission requirements that will also inform our assessment of content, staffing and costs of the program going forward. The Provost will provide an update to the faculty in fall 2009 on these analyses and on her consultations with chairs of departments that contribute to the postbacc program.
- Asch Center. I agree with CAP's assessment of the Asch Center's potential to contribute to the College's mission, in particular to our potential to enrich the global dimensions of our research and teaching. I also support CAP's request to the Center's directors for specific plans to realize this potential and to secure ongoing funding for the Center.
- Academic Programs. At present, the College supports 14 concentrations and programs that exist outside of departmental structures. While this array of programs testifies to the wide-ranging interests of our faculty and students, we cannot achieve adequate critical mass or provide reasonable financial support to this number of extra-departmental initiatives. A comprehensive review of these programs is timely, and I look forward to CAP's work on this topic in AY 2009-2010. In this review, I urge CAP to consider the contribution of each program to the College's mission and to achieving institutional priorities established in recent and ongoing institutional planning efforts.

Thank you once again for your dedication to Bryn Mawr and for your thoughtful advice to me during my first year at the College. It has been a pleasure to work with you, and I look forward to our continuing collaboration in 2009-2010.

Sincerely yours,



Jane Dammen McAuliffe
President

cc: Provost Kim Cassidy