

Committee on Academic Priorities
2002-2003

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B R Y N M A W R

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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GENERAL FACULTY 2002-2003

The members of the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP) during this academic year included, in the fall term, Michelle Francl (Convenor, Chemistry), Cynthia Bisman (GSSWSR), Penny Armstrong (French), Azade Seyhan (German) and Sharon Ullman (History). Katherine Rowe (English) replaced Penny Armstrong for the full spring term, and Kim Cassidy was elected at mid-semester to replace Sharon Ullman, who was on leave during second semester. CAP met weekly; the Provost joined us for most meetings at our invitation. The Provost's office, particularly Associate Provost Suzanne Spain, was instrumental in providing data and other administrative support to CAP. During the course of the year, CAP met with President Vickers, the Committee on Appointments, the Dean of the Undergraduate College, Haverford's Educational Policy Committee (EPC), review teams for the Departments of Mathematics and Geology, and the Departments of German, Physics, English, Russian, Anthropology, and Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, and the bi-college Education Program. Before the end of the year CAP will also have met with the co-deans of the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. Representatives from CAP sit on the Committee on Institutional Priorities and its budget and facilities subcommittees, as well as on the Two College Committee on Academic Cooperation (TCCAC). CAP also met several times with representatives from the Board of Trustees as part of the Board's reorganization and its review of President Vickers.

CAP's work this year addressed both strategic academic planning for the College and its programs, as well as the regular review of departmental requests for staffing. CAP's major project in the area of strategic planning resulted in the development of guidelines around our practices for assessing faculty teachings loads, i.e. what constitutes a course? Our work on this issue is summarized in a separate document.

The Plan for the New Century drives CAP's assessment of institutional priorities. We seek to advance the mission and goals of the institution as expressed in the Plan, both in evaluating proposals from departments and proffering advice to the President and Provost on other academic matters. As much as possible, therefore, new ventures should foster undergraduate recruitment and retention, promote the development of a faculty of excellent teacher-scholars and encourage and support interdisciplinary endeavors in both teaching and research. We look not only at a department's or program's needs with respect to its own curriculum, but also at institutional needs and how the department helps to meet those goals. We seek a balance between the resources required by departments and programs to train their majors and the burdens shared across the institution, such as the language requirement, College Seminars, divisional requirements and the quantitative requirement.

Strategic Planning for College Programs

Bi-College Cooperation

Led by the Presidents and Provosts of both Bryn Mawr and Haverford, TCCAC met twice this year and reaffirmed the two institutions' commitment to bi-college cooperation. Discussion focused on ways to encourage collaboration. Faculty members from the bi-co Departments of Classics and English shared their efforts at collaborative planning. CAP and Haverford's Educational Policy Committee (EPC) have begun working more closely together on the review of requests for positions. Proposals for new positions are shared between the committees and discussed at a joint meeting. As part of the planning process, both CAP and EPC are looking for evidence that departments have shaped positions in consultation with each other, rather than rely on pro forma approval via their respective chairs. We recommend that departments consult the 1988 guidelines for cooperation between counterpart departments, which is available at the Provost's web site (<http://www.brynmawr.edu/provost/hb/bico.html#1988b>). We also ask departments to meet at least annually with their counterpart department, to plan both the overall curriculum and the cycle of course offerings. At EPC's invitation a group of Bryn Mawr faculty visited the Haverford's faculty meeting in February to discuss ways in which the colleges and their faculty might appropriately support bi-college efforts, the complement of this meeting at Bryn Mawr is planned for early next fall.

Directors of the Arts Programs

Last fall, the Committee on Appointments, prompted by their recent review of the directors of the Dance, Theater and Creative Writing programs, consulted CAP about converting these three positions from continuing non-tenure track to tenure track. The *Plan for a New Century* has as one of its two major goals the recruitment and retention of undergraduate students. The thriving Arts program at the College plays a significant role in both attracting and retaining students, and the Plan commits to increasing the visibility of the Arts program and integrating its work more fully into the academic life of the institution.

Maintaining and growing an active Arts program requires strong leadership and continuity. It would seem sensible that such leadership be assumed by tenured or tenure-track faculty who constitute the College's traditional scholarly body. While regular continuing non-tenure track faculty are evaluated mostly in terms of their teaching effectiveness and are expected to show evidence of continuing professional development in pedagogy, the yardstick for evaluating senior Arts faculty is different. The triad of teaching, service and scholarship is used, just as it is for regular tenure track faculty. If the College expects there to be "a body of creative/scholarly work and/or performance record which has been recognized or evaluated by colleagues in the field beyond the College community", it must have a mechanism to help the faculty sustain their work. Conversion of these positions to tenure track would provide such support in the form of sabbatical leaves, representation on major College committees, and increased participation in the intellectual community.

Originally, the Arts programs were envisioned as having only continuing non-tenure track appointments, supported by a large number of adjunct faculty. The intent of this model was to encourage the development of fresh and diverse perspectives. However, as the programs have developed and student demand for Arts courses has continued to grow, it has become clear that effectively orchestrating the movement of so many adjuncts through these programs requires strong, long-term leadership. The present programs benefit from both the creative and intellectual strengths and the institutional experience of the directors, as well as the diverse talents of the adjuncts they appoint and mentor.

CAP realizes the conversion of these positions to tenure-track has both budgetary and staffing implications. Nevertheless, the conversion is warranted, as it promotes important goals of the Plan by more tightly connecting the Arts programs to the academic structure and bolstering our ability to recruit and retain undergraduates. It also recognizes the special status of the Arts appointments, and

hence brings our provisions for senior Arts faculty into line with our current expectations of them, as permanent and active members of the scholarly community. Therefore, after consultation with the Committee on Appointments, CAP recommended to the President that the positions of the Arts directors be made tenure-track. The Committee on Appointments reviewed the faculty members in these positions, according to their usual procedures, and made appropriate recommendations with respect to their promotion.

Director of the Writing Center

The Provost requested that CAP review the terms of employment and responsibilities of the Director of the Writing Center. In the five years that the center has been running, the reporting structure for the Director has been inconsistent and the teaching responsibilities associated with the position and their evaluation have been unclear. CAP affirms the critical role of the Writing Center Director in supporting programs such as the writing tutors and the College Seminars that are key to our goals of undergraduate success and retention. The Center enables undergraduates to undertake the work we expect of them at both the introductory and advanced levels. CAP recommends that the position be a continuing non-tenure track position, with approximately 60% of its effort devoted to teaching and remaining 40% to the work of the Writing Center. The Director will continue to report to the Dean of the College with respect to the Writing Center. The departmental home for this position should correspond to the professional background the director brings to the College. The teaching associated with this position is understood to belong to the Director's home department and to related departments in which courses taught by the Director are cross-listed. The Director's contribution to the curriculum of the home department is intended as a supplement to the department's current offerings. The tutoring and development associated with this position is understood to belong to the writing center and its budget. The Director's contribution to the College's teaching will be arranged in consultation with the chair of the Director's home department and will be evaluated by the Committee on Appointments via the usual process for continuing non-tenure track appointments. Making the Writing Center director's position explicitly a faculty appointment acknowledges the vital intellectual role writing has as a core part of the liberal arts enterprise, as well as brings the evaluation of the Director's teaching into line with the regular practice of the College.

Education: 5th year program for teacher certification

The bi-college Education Program has proposed the creation of a 5th year certification option to meet the needs of Bryn Mawr and Haverford students who wish to earn their secondary teaching certificates, but cannot complete the requisite courses during their first four years. The proposed option provides for a reduced tuition rate for students from both colleges, half the rate that is currently offered to Bryn Mawr alumnae returning to take undergraduate courses at the College. Bryn Mawr students in the program would be able to enroll in Education courses at Haverford. Bryn Mawr and Haverford would share any revenue generated by the program. The program, which expects to enroll approximately 5 students per year, is not expected to generate a large amount of revenue for either institution.

While most of the 5 to 10 students a year who seek certification through the bi-college Education Program complete the requirements during their first 4 years, a few, particularly those who take a junior year abroad or who elect to do laboratory research, find it logistically impossible to complete their student teaching during their senior year. Arguably, these are the very experiences one would hope teachers to have, particularly teachers prepared in the context of a liberal arts education.

CAP, in consultation with EPC at Haverford, endorses this excellent proposal and recommends that the two colleges take steps to implement the changes necessary to allow students from both institutions to participate on even terms in the program. Our support does not extend to additional staffing or administrative support. In fact, we expect there to be no incremental growth in course staffing, administrative support or stipends (with the exception of the additional stipends provided to mentoring teachers from specific fees paid by student teachers) resulting from the

implementation of a 5th year option. We also wish to point out that because the College is not in a position to create additional sections of the required courses, it will be necessary to turn down students for the 5th year program if it appears that the regular track is at capacity.

Film

Over the past year the President and Provost have convened faculty who regularly teach film as a discipline, to study the feasibility of a formal program in film at the College. As part of this process, CAP met with the President and key faculty members to review current institutional needs, faculty resources, and programming options. As a result of these deliberations, CAP recommends the establishment of a formal program in film. In CAP's assessment, the existence of a formal program in film would contribute significantly to three core goals of the Plan: recruitment of excellent undergraduates, retention, and fundraising. Sufficient resources exist at the College, CAP believes, to sustain a film program and enable it to mount a minor. Recent appointments in History of Art and English have laid the groundwork for regular rotations of a core sequence of film courses. Increasing numbers of our faculty offer courses with substantial focus on film, in departments such as Russian and Cities. A formal program with a minor would bring curricular shape and direction to these excellent offerings, currently scattered about the College, which could constitute a menu of elective courses. Student response to the core courses has been enthusiastic, and we estimate 15 to 20 undergraduates would declare as minors now, if they had the option. As many as 5 additional minors from Haverford might sign on. Therefore CAP recommends the establishment of a small Steering Committee to finalize a proposal for a minor in film, to be brought to the Curriculum Committee in 2003-2004. CAP also proposes to convene, this spring, a meeting of faculty who might offer courses towards this minor, with their department chairs.

Interdisciplinary Appointments

CAP worked with the Provost and the Committee on Appointments this year to clarify some of the language around new interdisciplinary appointments. As many of our faculty's scholarly and pedagogical efforts continue to blur the distinctions between the disciplines, the institution needs to be clear about the expectations and evaluation of faculty in areas which cross our established departmental boundaries.

Russian

A representative from CAP met with the Russian Department at their request to provide feedback at they move forward with restructuring. We are encouraged by their progress on the issues raised in a series of meetings held with students, faculty, CAP, the Dean of the GSAS, the Provost and the President during the 2000-2001 academic year.

CAP commends Russian's efforts to more tightly integrate its two programs and to reduce the costs associated with their graduate enterprise via curricular re-structuring and grant funding. CAP suggests that the Department continue to examine its curricular structure and pedagogical approaches as further ways to balance the resources for undergraduate and graduate education in keeping with the goals of the Plan. CAP sees the Department as having a range of opportunities to increase its contribution to the goals of undergraduate recruitment and retention. Current activities already include new course offerings, efforts to enroll students from Haverford and Swarthmore and contributions to College Seminars and other interdisciplinary endeavors such as Comparative Literature and Film.

Review of Centers

At the request of President Vickers, CAP, along with the Committee on Appointments, is reviewing the four centers (Science in Society; Visual Culture; International Studies; Ethnicities, Communities and Social Policy). The President is preparing to report to the Board of Trustees, and to the Pew Foundation, which provided some of the initial funding, on the current state of their development. After three years of development and programming, responsibility for the centers is shifting from the President's office to that of the Provost and the College's regular budget will begin to support

the centers' work. Therefore, the institution is taking the opportunity to assess in what ways the centers are contributing to our intellectual vitality and what directions they are finding most productive. The centers themselves have completed a brief self-study and faculty have been invited to share their comments and experiences with the centers with both CAP and the Committee on Appointments. Based on this information, CAP will share with the President later this spring its assessment of how the centers are contributing to moving forward various aspects of the *Plan for a New Century*.

Strategic planning for the curriculum

As the College works to close the "structural deficit" that exists between the growth of our curricular offerings and the size of the undergraduate student body, a critical need emerges for strategic planning around the curriculum. Faculty must play a central role in considering how best to encourage continued pedagogical growth without a concomitant or disproportionate growth in the size of the curriculum. CAP recommends that the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee serve as such a curricular strategic planning group. We have therefore suggested to the committee working on the revised Plan of Government that the role of the Curriculum Committee be strengthened, both by providing for election of its members from the floor of the faculty, as well as for a rotating faculty chair. This committee would have as its principal charge strategic planning for the curriculum, including prioritizing and making recommendations with respect to curricular initiatives.

Recommendations for Regular Departmental Requests for Positions

Anthropology

The Anthropology Department has asked to extend what is currently a half-time continuing non-tenure track appointment focussed on physical anthropology, into a full time continuing non-tenure track position. CAP notes that this position has been de facto full time in recent years. This department bears a substantial burden of undergraduate teaching, covering on average more than 110 undergraduate enrollments/faculty teaching FTE and generally enrolling between 25 and 30 majors a year. Converting the position to full time contributes to greater stability in the Department and enhances our ability to retain excellent faculty. Finally, this position also provides coverage of an important area with strong connections to other highly enrolled programs at the College, for example, biology. CAP has recommended that the position become full time, continuing non-tenure track.

Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology

The Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology is seeking a tenure-track replacement position to maintain its coverage of Near Eastern and Egyptian archaeology at both the undergraduate and graduate level. The Department also envisions this position making stronger connections between Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology and other programs at the College, including Environmental Studies, Geology, Anthropology and Cities. Undergraduate offerings in the Near East and Egypt tend to be the largest courses in the Department's pantheon. The Department is highly ranked by the National Research Council, whose recommendations suggest a minimum department size of five to maintain an adequate graduate program. There was a significant drop in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology enrollments about 5 years ago, possibly due to frequent turnover in staffing. Enrollments have been rather low (35 undergraduate enrollments/teaching faculty FTE) in comparison to those in comparably staffed departments with graduate programs.

CAP applauds Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology's initial efforts to draw on its historical strength and its respected graduate program in order to reach out to areas of the undergraduate curriculum that could benefit from connections to archaeology, particularly to departments and programs that are highly enrolled, such as Cities and Anthropology. Clearly, forging closer ties with allied departments and programs and growing undergraduate enrollments cannot happen overnight and without the encouragement and support of the institution. Nevertheless, as the

College continues to face serious financial constraints, it would be difficult to consider committing additional resources to this department, given our primary mission of undergraduate education and our urgent goals for recruitment and retention. Therefore, CAP declines to recommend this replacement position.

However, the unique, external resource of the Mellon bridge grant might be used profitably and perhaps immediately, CAP believes, to support this position and thus sustain the momentum for the changes initiated by Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology. The Mellon grant provides for up to five bridge appointments in a limited subset of humanities departments (one of which is Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology) for the purpose of sustaining curricular innovation in the Humanities at the College. CAP recommends the College commit one of the Mellon bridging positions to the appointment of a tenure-track assistant professor in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology specializing in the Near East and Egypt, who would bring an increased emphasis on new technologies to the Department. CAP looks forward to a future of healthy undergraduate enrollments in a Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology committed to a liberal arts curriculum where the sciences, social sciences and humanities meet. CAP encourages the Department's ongoing reflection on its curricular structure and pedagogical approaches as a further means of balancing the resources for undergraduate and graduate education.

Education

The bi-college Education Program is seeking to convert an on-going 3-year interim appointment to a continuing non-tenure track position. Over the last decade, Education has grown a rigorous, robust and vital program, serving 20 to 30 Haverford and Bryn Mawr students a year as minors while roughly 5 to 10 students at the two colleges complete the requirements for certification each year. Education is a fully bi-college program, with the costs for staffing and administrative support borne equally by the two colleges. Currently, the permanent staffing in Education consists of one full time tenure track appointment and one CNTT, along with a full time administrative support person. The Program contributes significantly to Bryn Mawr's College Seminar program and sees its support of this endeavor as connected in essential ways to its mission and scholarly work. The Writing for College summer program has recently been added to the Program's portfolio.

The principle benefit of converting the interim position to CNTT would be to provide continuity to the Program and enable Education to meet its current curricular needs with permanent staffing. Three full-time positions can fully cover the Education curriculum in most years, as long as the FTE devoted to administrative tasks remains small. CAP recommends that this position be fully devoted to teaching and that the running of the Writing for College program be covered by a stipend from that program, in keeping with the practice in other departments and programs. The new praxis course being offered next year is an exciting addition to the program, but it should replace an existing course, not become an additional load on the program. For Education to continue to contribute a course a year to the College Seminar program, it may require one or two courses a year from adjuncts, depending on enrollments.

English

The Department of English has requested authorization for a tenure-track, assistant professor, replacement position with primary expertise in the Victorian Age. The retirement of the faculty member in this area leaves a critical gap in the curriculum, as this period is not represented in the other two tri-colleges. Since the Department of English annually offers eight College Seminars which amounts to two full FTE's worth of courses, their ten department members, in effect, contribute only eight FTE's worth of courses to the curriculum. Yet the Department continues to have very high enrollments. In the past five years the average undergraduate enrollment to teaching faculty FTE ratio has been about 70. Furthermore, the Department has consistently had 35 to 40 majors a year.

CAP agrees that the appointment of a faculty member to cover the "long nineteenth century" of British literary studies, from English Romanticism, through the Victorian Age, to the onset of the twentieth century, will maintain both the curricular coherence of the major and the balance between the American and British fields of the discipline. Therefore, CAP recommends a search for an assistant professor of Nineteenth-Century British Literary Studies with a strong interest in new interdisciplinary approaches (who can also contribute to the College Seminars).

German

The Department of German has requested a tenure-track position at the Assistant Professor or advanced Assistant Professor level in German and Comparative Literature with additional expertise in German-Jewish Studies, to teach three-fifths in German and two-fifths in Comparative Literature. The faculty member in this position might teach courses in the general areas of German literary studies, Jewish Writing and Thought in German Culture, Modern German-Jewish Identities, Shoah in Film and Literature, and designated as well as elective courses in Comparative Literature.

CAP acknowledges the needs of the German Department for additional continuing staffing. Faculty in the Department heavily contribute to the intellectual life of the College and its interdisciplinary directions, including regularly staffing the core course in Comparative Literature, and offering courses cross-listed with Philosophy, Feminist and Gender Studies, and Cities. The Department also participates in the College Seminar program and the Centers. In addition, German contributes a substantial amount of course time towards the College language requirement. Enrollments in the department have averaged 60 undergraduate enrollments/teaching FTE over the last five years, and the department has regularly relied on adjunct staffing to cover its commitments to both the major and Comparative Literature. Given the current constraints on College resources, CAP cannot recommend an expansion position now even given the demonstrable need.

Last year CAP was very hopeful that a search in Comparative Literature would go forward this year and yield an individual who could contribute to both German and Comparative Literature. This spring CAP met with members of the Comparative Literature steering committee from both Bryn Mawr and Haverford to explore integrating German's current request with the previously approved position in Comparative Literature. This pending position in support of the new sabbatical plan with its connection to international initiatives will contribute significantly to three goals of the *Plan for a New Century*: recruitment, retention and fundraising. The recent review of Comparative Literature clearly articulated the need of the program for a dedicated position at the advanced assistant or associate professor level. This need is particularly acute given recent retirements. CAP continues to affirm the highest priority for the Comparative Literature search among the pending positions in support of the new sabbatical plan. The Comparative Literature Steering Committee expressed concern that combining the positions would lead to divided loyalties. Some members of the Comparative Literature Steering Committee feel that defining the field with emphasis on a specific literary area, even in a comparative context, would narrow the applicant pool. CAP appreciates these concerns. At the same time, CAP feels the needs are urgent in both programs. Moreover, without additional staffing now, the Comparative Literature program will continue for the foreseeable future to manage its staffing and leadership as it has, piecemeal. CAP would welcome a joint request from the Comparative Literature Steering Committee and German for an advanced assistant or associate professor and chair of Comparative Literature and would strongly recommend that a search for a position agreed on by both parties go forward, as soon as the College's financial situation permits it. As CAP considers other replacement positions in related fields, we will continue to consider other creative proposals to meet Comparative Literature's needs in both the short and long term.

Physics

The Department of Physics requests permission to add a full-time tenure line to their existing staff of 4 tenure-line faculty and one lab-coordinator. This line would replace existing adjunct hires that cover leaves and the Department's regular and substantial contributions to College Seminar. By

adding a new tenure line, the Department would gain continuity and additional research opportunities for majors. At the same time, the College would incur substantial investment costs associated with launching a lab and research infrastructure for a new Assistant Professor. Physics sustains several resource-intensive programs: a graduate program (albeit tutorial and small); an intensive senior experience; regular rotation of faculty through courses without repeat preparations.

The Department's national reputation for producing women physicists testifies to the success of these programs, and the strong contribution they make towards the science component of the *Plan for a New Century*. CAP notes, however, that the number of majors has been steady or nearly so over the last decade, at about 10. The average undergraduate enrollment/teaching faculty FTE over the last five years is 52, somewhat lower than the College average. These facts suggest that the program is stable as well as thriving, with no significant increase in enrollment stresses nor substantial need to add more research opportunities over the short term. In the light of this stability and the current economic constraints on the College budget, CAP does not recommend an expansion line at this time.

Recommendations for Positions in Support of the New Sabbatical Plan

In academic years 2000-01 and 2001-02, CAP recommended adding the following positions to support the new sabbatical plan: Computational Science, Legal Studies, Environmental Studies, Romance Languages and Literatures, Urban Social Problems and Policy, Anthropology and Psychology, Drama, Comparative Literature, Economics, and Statistics. Faculty have been hired for the both the Computational Scientist and Legal Studies positions. In 2002-2003, given the budgetary constraints, the College was unable to move forward with any additional searches. CAP remains committed to this set of positions. They represent our best thinking as to how to cover leaves within departments and programs, and minimize the need to hire leave replacements. CAP hopes that as the budget permits in the future, we can continue our work of "leave-proofing" departments and programs in ways that make the best use of our always limited resources. CAP will keep its pool of recommended expansion positions in reserve until the College is able once again to grow the faculty. We recognize that the situation is, and will be, fluid and that the way in which we proceed in the future depends on many factors including: fund raising, personnel changes, and newly emerging priorities of the College.

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