

Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom / Honor Futures Final Report
Academic Year 2025–2026
May 2026

Roberta Ricci (Chair, AY 2025–2026), Hoday King (Spring 2026), Amanda Weidman (Spring 2026).

NB Selby Hearsh (Fall 2025), Alicia Walker (Fall 2025).

The Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom was formally established in November 2025 following a letter addressed to the faculty in October 2025 by Isabel Stid '26, co-head of the Honor Board and member of the Honor Code Futures Committee. The letter invited greater collaboration between students and faculty concerning Honor Futures initiatives and issues related to academic freedom.

Letter of Appreciation for Faculty Involvement in the Honor Code Futures Committee

We are grateful that, in adopting its statement on academic freedom, the faculty has exercised its crucial responsibility [...] in promoting academic freedom for all members of the campus community, including students. [...] Beyond this presence in our meetings, we hope there might be occasions for conversations with the faculty as a whole to discuss the honor code as it relates to academic freedom and related issues. Most students know faculty primarily as their teachers; we would welcome the opportunity to engage with the faculty as partners in dialogue. I hope you might let us know if there is an occasion or forum in which we might be able to begin this engagement.

Motion Approved at the November 12, 2025 Faculty Meeting

We move to proceed with the formation of an ad hoc committee of the Faculty focused on matters related to academic freedom at Bryn Mawr College. The Nominations Committee is hereby tasked with organizing Faculty elections by slate to constitute this committee.

The newly elected ad hoc Faculty Committee will consist of three members. These members will represent the Faculty in discussions concerning academic freedom with other constituencies of the College— including representatives of the student body, senior administration, and the Board of Trustees—in consultation with, and at the direction of, the Faculty.

To effectively represent the perspectives of the Faculty, the committee will engage faculty in discussions on issues that pertain to Honor Futures/academic freedom at the College and report to the Faculty regarding discussions with other College constituencies on this topic.

The committee will elect a Chair, who will attend Advisory Council meetings, at the invitation of the Chair of the Faculty, and other committee meetings as deemed necessary by those committees. The committee will serve at the pleasure of the Faculty until May 2026.

With 57 clickers distributed and 55 votes cast, the motion passed with 82% voting in favor, 11% opposed, and 7% abstaining.

During Spring 2026, the ad hoc committee met regularly and conducted extensive research concerning matters of academic freedom. Faculty participants discussed a range of topics raised by students and colleagues. In addition, the full working group met weekly on Fridays from 4:00–5:30 p.m. Participants included Roberta Ricci, Hoday King, Amanda Weidman, Denine Rocco (Interim Dean of Student Life), five to six students, Board members Dana Thompson '94 and Theresa Wallace '79, and facilitators Alice Lesnick and Jeremy Elkins.

The working group collaboratively revised and drafted policies and guidelines intended to improve institutional transparency in the following areas:

- Dean's Panels (including definition, purpose, jurisdiction, and composition)
- Confidentiality in Honor Board and Dean's Panel proceedings
- College investigations
- Surveillance camera policies

This student-led process culminated in the successful advancement of proposed policy revisions during plenary proceedings on April 26, 2026.

Recognizing the continuing need for sustained faculty participation in matters concerning academic freedom, the committee recommended the establishment of a longer-term faculty body dedicated to consultation and collaboration with students, administrators, and trustees. The committee envisioned this body as an institutional forum through which faculty perspectives could be represented in institutional discussions concerning academic freedom and related policy development.

Following comparative research on practices at peer institutions, consultation with faculty colleagues, and discussion at the special faculty meeting held on April 13, 2026, the committee introduced a motion at the April 22, 2026 faculty meeting proposing the creation of a new ad hoc committee on academic freedom that would work in dialogue with other constituencies of the College dedicated to collaboratively drafting a joint statement on academic freedom.

Motion approved at the April 22, 2025 Faculty Meeting

The motion, including an amendment opening it to all faculty (not only tenured faculty), passed with 76 votes cast: 74% in favor, 9% opposed, and 17% abstaining.

We move to establish a three-year Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom focused on matters related to academic freedom at Bryn Mawr College.

The Nominations Committee is hereby charged with organizing Faculty elections by slate to constitute this committee. The newly elected ad hoc Faculty Committee will consist of three ~~tenured~~ faculty members. The committee will have two main charges:

1. *To represent the Faculty and act in consultation with, and at the direction of, the Faculty in discussions concerning academic freedom with other constituencies of the College, including representatives of senior administration and the Board of Trustees, as part of an institutional process addressing academic freedom.*
2. *To serve as a resource for students by consulting and providing faculty perspectives in student-led conversations on College policies and procedures that bear on academic freedom.*

To ensure effective representation of Faculty perspectives, the committee will report periodically to the Faculty regarding its discussions with other College constituencies (administration, Board, and students) on these matters.

The committee will serve at the pleasure of the Faculty through Spring 2029.

Our final full-group meeting, held on May 8, 2026, included President Wendy Cadge, Denine Rocco, and Tomiko Jenkins (Interim Dean of the Undergraduate College). The meeting focused on reflecting upon the outcomes of the collaborative process, identifying outstanding issues requiring further attention, and considering strategies for implementation, communication, and continued institutional learning across multiple domains.