

Committee on Academic Priorities

Grace Armstrong, *French and Francophone Studies*, 2019-20 – 2022-23, *Chair* 2021-22

Don Barber, *Environmental Studies and Geology*, 2019-20 – 2022-23

Radcliffe Edmonds, *Greek, Latin, and Classical Studies*, 2019-20 – 2022-23

Maja Šešelj, *Anthropology*, 2021-22 – 2024-25

Kate Thomas, *Literatures in English*, 2021-22 – 2024-25

BRYN MAWR

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Annual Report to the Faculty 2021-22

The Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP) membership for 2021-22 consisted of Grace Armstrong (French and Francophone Studies, CAP Chair), Don Barber (Environmental Studies and Geology), Radcliffe Edmonds (Greek, Latin, and Classical Studies), Maja Šešelj (Anthropology), and Kate Thomas (Literatures in English).

Tim Harte attended CAP meetings by invitation. CAP is grateful for the administrative and clerical support provided by the Provost's Office, and the committee especially thanks Tina Bockius, in her second year, for setting up meetings with departments, curating our Moodle website, and keeping us on track.

CAP met once a week during the fall semester and twice a week in the spring. As Chair of CAP, Grace Armstrong served on the Advisory Council of the Faculty, was our representative to the Board of Trustees, and represented CAP on three outside reviews (Philosophy, The Teaching and Learning Initiative, and Biology) and along with Radcliffe Edmonds, on the Middle States-College Planning Committee; Don Barber served as CAP's representative to the College Budget Committee, and Radcliffe Edmonds served as CAP's representative to the Strategic Advisory Group.

Although the major portion of CAP's work entailed meeting with departments and programs and making recommendations about their position requests, CAP also engaged in other efforts during the 2021-22 academic year. Immediately below, as a preamble to our recommendations, we report on our experience in deliberating these critical issues.

Reflections on CAP's Mission and Role

CAP's consideration of institutional priorities each year takes place in an environment of finite resources. Our faculty remains at a steady state in terms of number of positions, which means that any proposal for a new line can be supported only when CAP reallocates a line from another department or program. Among the primary reasons for these limits are the relative inflexibility of the size of our student body and of our already low student/faculty ratio. As CAP has stated repeatedly in recent years, no faculty position is automatically replaced, even when departments

make position requests in the wake of departures and retirements. While the force of such requests may rest on the success of the department's functioning with its staffing allotments, CAP must use these opportunities to work with the department to adapt to the evolving priorities of the College. As the College responds to changing circumstances, CAP must figure out how to support new directions in academic priorities within the existing faculty pool.^[1]

In evaluating institutional priorities, CAP must be guided first and foremost by the aim of promoting the excellence of Bryn Mawr College as a small liberal arts college, as an institution created for the higher education of women, including graduate education as part of its mission from its foundation. Because CAP has at its disposal primarily long-term solutions (i.e., tenure-line positions), CAP must be cautious in responding to problems that appear pressing in the short or immediate term. The enrollments or number of majors in various programs often respond to the vicissitudes of the financial markets, as in recent economic downturns that created a demand for majors that students (or their parents) deem more "practical", or to other conditions, such as the restrictions on international travel and in-person performance that curtailed the activities of programs in international studies, foreign languages, and the arts. Such fluctuations, however, cannot be the primary guiding forces that determine the long-term priorities of the college.

Acknowledging that enrollment pressures are serious for a number of programs, CAP, as representative of the College community, must nonetheless resist the temptation to make simplistic and short-term decisions on the basis of the most easily quantifiable and comparable data. Rather, CAP must consider what resource allocations will best support the College's mission, recognizing that a breadth of programs and disciplines are essential to a liberal arts education. While many of the College's programs remain small, shifting resources from the smaller programs to larger ones runs the risk of increasing the disparities, as the increased resources generate greater demand in the larger programs and the lack of resources further depletes the ability of the smaller programs to provide a rich curricular experience. CAP needs to consider how to balance the resource allocations across the departments and programs to ensure that the college can sustain its ability to offer a capacious liberal arts education while adapting to the changes that continue to take place within the world of higher education.

To that end, CAP must ensure that it consults regularly and effectively with the Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum at Bryn Mawr, as well as the counterpart committees at Haverford. CAP must also remain cognizant of the history and development of the departments and programs at the college, noting when programs have increased or decreased their tenure-line allotments, evaluating the consequences of such alterations, and making adjustments in the best interests of the College as a whole. Closer attention to such histories should enable CAP to evaluate position requests not simply on a year-to-year basis, but with an eye to the longer term. In practical terms, then, departments that have had a departure or retirement need not fear that they must rush to propose a new position lest they "lose the line." Rather, they should be encouraged to take the necessary time to fashion a proposal that best suits the emerging and future needs of their program, needs which have undoubtedly shifted since the faculty member vacating that position first arrived

^[1] Occasionally, through donor gifts, we have been able to add faculty positions. During the past six years, such gifts have enabled the College to add two faculty lines in International Studies, one in Environmental Studies, one in STEM, and one in Data Science. Although Bryn Mawr is grateful to our generous alumnae, the number of faculty cannot be expanded indefinitely to address emergent needs of the College. The bequests and gifts from various sources may provide opportunities in the future, and we hope for them to continue, but they are always the result of years of negotiations and time-consuming development work, and the college cannot rely on such solutions to grapple with immediate needs.

(often many decades earlier). To facilitate this process, CAP recommends that the Provost regularly (but not automatically) approve, for one or more years, an interim Visiting Assistant Professor in departments or programs that lose a tenured or tenure-track faculty member.

Since no department “owns” a line, vacated positions enable CAP to allocate resources each year to departments with compelling proposals, but CAP’s attention to the history of each program and to the long-term consequences of each tenure-line allocation means that a vacated line might well be allocated again to a department, even after several years. At the same time, the limitation on the number of faculty lines means that CAP is constrained in its allocations each year, making it difficult to respond nimbly to exceptional situations, such as the need to provide a line for a partner hire or to establish a new program. Rather than thinking in the short term and trying to achieve a zero-balance of lines on a yearly basis, CAP needs to view this pool of faculty lines over multiple years for the best long-term interests of the College. To do so, CAP must carefully review records of the tenure-track and continuing non-tenure-track positions vacated by resignation or retirement during the past fifteen years and maintain such records going forward.

CAP Processes

In an effort to conserve some of the considerable time and energy required for proposing a faculty line, the streamlined CAP processes adopted in 2018-2019 made listening meetings optional and by request. CAP recognizes that every position proposal is different, and departments or programs interested in having a conversation with CAP before submitting a full position proposal are still encouraged to request a listening meeting in their letters of intent. Similarly, support letters (beyond counterpart departments at Haverford) are also optional but welcomed if appropriate.

This year, the ten departments and programs that submitted a letter of intent requested such a meeting in semester I. Subsequent to these listening meetings, three decided not to pursue their proposals. We request that, as is the case this year and going forward, all departments and programs submitting a letter of intent clearly state whether a listening meeting is requested or declined.

In May of 2012, CAP brought a proposal to the Faculty to allow departments or programs that lose a junior faculty member in the initial term not to resubmit the position request if it remains unchanged. If the request is changed, the department or program must resubmit the proposal. The Faculty approved this proposal. CAP then outlined a procedure whereby, in either case, the requesting department or program would meet with the Provost and a representative from Curriculum Committee, CAP, and Appointments as a moment of opportunity to reflect on the position. If the need and the proposal remain unchanged, then the requesting entity is allowed to reopen the search the following autumn. If the position is reformulated after consultation with Curriculum Committee, CAP, and other interested individuals or entities, the resubmitted proposal is considered by CAP in the following autumn “with the understanding that CAP will be favorably inclined, in most cases, toward a reconceptualized position request that meets both departmental/programmatic and College-wide needs.” (Addendum to CAP Report 2011-12, p. 2).

Although cognizant of time demands on faculty, CAP still believes that in the first case, when there is no change in the position description, the mandated discussion should occur between the department Chair, the Provost, and representatives from Curriculum, CAP and Appointments. Three departments in this situation – Biology, Environmental Studies, and Mathematics – have

asked to reopen their searches in Semester I, 2022-23. In the second case, CAP notes that departments and programs can benefit from the opportunity to gauge whether needs have changed or whether the position description contributed in some way to the departure, thus making the best use of a resubmitted proposal in the following fall term. CAP also recommends that the Provost offer an exit interview to the departing faculty member.

Reflections on the Bi-College Relationship

CAP spent considerable time discussing the issue of Bi-Co collaboration. Not only was this topic raised in discussions about specific position requests, but concerted efforts of past CAPs have been devoted to improving resource allocation and consultation among the Bi-Co and Tri-Co. In 2019-20, a collaborative Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that prescribes specific consultative processes for Tri- and Bi-Co departments' resource requests was signed by CAP, Swarthmore's Council on Educational Policy (CEP) and Haverford's Educational Policy Committee (EPC), now superseded by the Strategic Personnel and Curriculum Committee (SCPC), as well as the three Provosts.

This year, a position request from the Bi-Co Department of German and German Studies prompted CAP to follow the procedure laid out in that MOU and consult with the newly formed SCPC. While this specific proposal was the immediate catalyst to our March meeting, CAP and SCPC had a wider-ranging and productive discussion that touched on timetable differences for submission of and recommendations about proposals. CAP and SCPC agreed to meet in late January before proceeding to make recommendations to the relevant President. SCPC also stated that it had followed CAP's procedure of using fall listening meetings to preview proposals. Please refer to CAP's response to the Bi-Co German and German Studies proposal for more details. CAP is pleased, therefore, to have taken the initial steps to work on "aligning the schedules by which Bryn Mawr, Swarthmore, and Haverford operate" (CAP Report 2019-20). Even though Swarthmore was not involved in this Bi-Co consultation, CAP feels that positive progress has been made in opening up lines of communication, whether about programmatic or larger issues. We look forward to further collaboration with SCPC.

Faculty Positions at the College

This year, as in the past, CAP's chief business was to review each position request in the context of several factors, including the request's relation to the College's mission, academic priorities, and strategic directions; its contributions to departmental and disciplinary directions; its impact on overall faculty resources at Bryn Mawr and in the Bi-Co; the flexibility of position requests and adaptive curricular designs (especially as they relate to our capacity to accommodate sabbatical leaves without additional staffing); the history of previous requests; and the College's commitment to increasing faculty diversity. All position requests were evaluated according to these parameters. Below, we describe each position request, address its implications for the long-term academic priorities of the College, and state our recommendations to the President concerning its implementation.

Pre- and Post-Doctoral Fellowships

- **Consortium for Faculty Diversity (CFD) Fellowship.** This Fellowship was not available in 2021-22 for competitive bids from different departments and programs as there is

already a CFD Fellow in place in Greek, Latin, and Classical Studies who has been offered a second term.

- **The Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship** – In fall of 2021, Africana Studies, which had been selected for this Fellowship, advertised widely for a post-doctoral scholar who could contribute courses in any of the following areas: criminology, visual culture, gender, and sexuality, and/or the histories of global Black activism and social movements. The position, while attracting interesting applicants, was not filled.
- There will be a renewed call for departments to host Mellon, CFD, and Bucher-Jackson postdoctoral fellows in semester I, 2022.

CAP's Responses to Faculty Position Requests

This year, CAP received letters of intent from ten different departments and programs, for a total of ten faculty lines. The Department of Growth and Structure of Cities and the Health Studies program did not submit a full proposal. Literatures in English withdrew its proposal in March. CAP, therefore, ultimately fielded full proposals from seven different departments and programs: Africana Studies, Arts Program in Theater, Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, French and Francophone Studies, German and German Studies, Psychology, and Spanish. All departments and programs were directed by the “request for position” template to consult with faculty in allied fields at Bryn Mawr and at Haverford. In addition, Biology, Environmental Studies, and Mathematics submitted requests to reopen searches for positions vacated by junior faculty during their initial appointment periods. In accordance with the CAP processes outlined above, CAP approved all three of these requests.

Program in Africana Studies, Tenure-Track Request

Africana Studies has requested a tenure-track position that would support their interdisciplinary program as it stands (it offers a minor) and also allow it to grow in the future. Students and faculty working in the fields of Africa and the African diaspora have argued that the program needs support to gain parity with other similar offerings on campus, and that it is very much in line with the College's mission to increase its investments in this field. Their voices have been joined by those of external reviewers, who called for “staffing specifically dedicated to Africana.” Currently, the program does its work with 0.5 FTE (shared with History), with the assistance of the Steering Committee members, who are all faculty with appointments in other departments and programs.

Africana's original proposal was for a position that would be in partnership with Data Science. CAP discussed the details of this proposal with Africana, first in a listening meeting in the fall before the formal proposal was submitted, and subsequently in other conversations occurring in semester II. CAP deemed that Data Science, or indeed the social sciences in general, might not provide the most capacious orientation for the program. This sense was confirmed when a new hire was made in Sociology (BMC) that adds to the social science resources already available to Africana. Africana agreed in early 2022 that, because their needs are expansive and interdisciplinary, they could indeed focus their proposal instead on the humanities.

CAP recognizes that the College has a pressing need for a tenure-track position in Africana that would form a cornerstone for their program. A full tenure-track line would provide the program with consistent leadership that could consolidate and energize its profile within the Bi-Co. We

therefore encourage Africana to bring a proposal to CAP later this spring or summer to be handled by an expedited process.

Bi-College Arts Program in Theater, Continuing Non-Tenure Track Request

The Bi-College Theater program requested the conversion of a long-term interim position in Theater Design to a CNTT line. The proposed position responsibilities include teaching two courses per academic year; designing elements for both of Theater's mainstage productions; managing the costume shop and the Costume collection; advising minors and some Independent majors; participating in policy and planning discussions within the Theater Program and with the larger Arts faculty; and serving on College committees. This interim position has existed for 9 years, most recently at a 1.0 FTE, which Theater considers not commensurate with the amount of work required. Converting it to a CNTT position would allow for more equitable salary and benefits, promote the important DEI work already performed by the interim hire, and permit multi-year collaborations central to the evolution of the Theater Program.

CAP recommends that the request from the Bi-College Arts Program in Theater for a conversion of a long-time interim position to a CNTT line not be approved for the following reasons:

Pedagogical responsibilities are the crux of a CNTT contract, but it is not clear that the teaching of two courses would be any different or more substantial than those teaching duties already shouldered by the interim hire among the various other responsibilities as Production Designer (Settings and Costumes), and Manager of the costume shop and collection. It is true, however, that the conversion to a longer-term contract would enable the hire to advise students with greater foresight, and we recognize that improvements in contractual continuity would be desirable for this position and the program's stability. Because of the disconnect between the proposal requirements and the typical CNTT profile, CAP suggests that this request be satisfied in a different way. A continuing staff position for the academic year would answer the need for continuity in planning for the future of the Theater program and in advising minors and independent majors. Since it is not in CAP's purview to recommend staff positions, we suggest that the Administration take this proposal and the solution we propose under advisement.

Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, Tenure-Track Expedited Request

The Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, following a resignation, submitted an expedited request for a tenure-track position, at the level of Assistant Professor, for a scholar who would specialize in the art and archaeology of the Near East, from the end of the late Bronze Age (c. 1200 BCE) through to the period of successors of Alexander the Great. Such a scholar would recognize the importance of cultural interconnections, both within Near Eastern civilizations and with the worlds of the ancient Mediterranean and Near East, broadly conceived. The department expects this scholar to contribute to both the undergraduate and graduate curricula, thereby advancing the department's ongoing and future interdisciplinary collaborations with other departments. Having depended in recent years on interim faculty to carry out the curriculum and advising, the department has a particularly strong need for a stable position that will enable them to plan for the future, both for their students and for the department itself.

CAP recommended that the expedited request from the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology for a tenure-track position in the area of Near Eastern Archaeology be approved at the beginning or advanced Assistant Professor level, for the following reasons:

CAP recommended the proposal in September 2021, it was approved by the President, and the department successfully made a hire in April 2022. CAP recognizes the vital and immediate need of the department to have stable faculty positions to carry on its educational mission for the College, crucial to the College's mission to support graduate education particularly the linchpin role that the department plays in the stability of the Graduate Group in the Humanities, which consists of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology; Greek, Latin, and Classical Studies; and the History of Art. CAP acknowledges the impact that the pandemic has had upon this discipline, as many of the opportunities for field work and museum internships that are most appealing to students have been inaccessible, resulting in a decline in enrollments for the department, as has been seen in other programs dependent on access to the field, especially overseas. CAP commends the department's efforts and intentions to develop new curricular avenues to bring in a larger and more diverse set of students and the department's aims to foster deeper connections with departments such as Anthropology and East Asian Languages and Cultures. Recognizing the challenges of finding a diversity of candidates in this field, CAP also applauds the department's plans for diversifying the applicant pool in this search by moving beyond the standard organizational postings intended to increase the number of BIPOC applicants, e.g., by tapping into networks in the Near East in search of more candidates who are less often represented in the discipline, especially women. CAP recommended the option to hire at the advanced Assistant Professor level not only to expand and diversify the pool of applicants, but also to provide the department with the opportunity to find a scholar who will be more ready to take on the challenges of graduate advising. Additionally, the department was willing to consider applicants from a range of cognate disciplinary backgrounds (e.g., Near Eastern studies; Egyptology) who may also have the skills to meet those challenges.

Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, Tenure-Track Request

The Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology submitted a request for a tenure-track line at the level of Assistant Professor in Classical Archaeology, with a focus on Roman archaeology. This request was prompted by an upcoming retirement, but the department reimagined this position to focus on the eastern provinces, including the Levant, Greece, Turkey, and North Africa, up through the 4th century CE to study the interactions between local communities and the Roman imperial state. The scholar would be expected to teach and advise at both the undergraduate and graduate levels of the curriculum. This position is key for maintaining the quality of the graduate program in CNEA and the Graduate Group in the Humanities more broadly, as the proposed position opens up new areas of collaboration among existing faculty in CNEA, History of Art, and Classics.

CAP recommends that the request from the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology be approved at the level of Assistant Professor for the following reasons:

The proposed position reaffirms the department's commitment to training students in the interconnectedness of the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern worlds at different points in time. The position would provide additional depth to the students focusing on Classical archaeology, while providing added breadth to students specializing in Near Eastern archaeology. The focus on Roman

provinces, particularly those in the east and in North Africa, is especially timely as the fields of classical archaeology and classical studies critically engage with issues of colonialism and postcolonialism, globalization, and inequality during the Roman period. CAP appreciates the effort the department has put into envisioning the new thematic, geographic, and temporal foci of this position, as they are of increasing interest to our students. They would also lead to a more diverse applicant pool and readily connect with other departments and programs at the College (including, but not limited to, Middle Eastern Studies, International Studies, Classics, History of Art, Cities, and Anthropology).

Department of French and Francophone Studies, Tenure-Track Request

The Department of French and Francophone Studies, upon the occasion of a recent retirement, submitted a request for a tenure-track position in theater and performance studies, visual studies, new media, and/or ecocriticism, particularly focused upon 19th-century French and Francophone literature and culture. The position profile includes the directorship of the Institut d'Avignon, and the department would seek someone whose research interests mesh with the programs of the Institut.

CAP recommends that the request from the Department of French and Francophone Studies for a tenure-track position in the area of theater and performance studies with the directorship of the Institut d'Avignon be approved at the Assistant Professor level, for the following reasons:

CAP recognizes the need for staffing in French and Francophone Studies, and the position as described, including the directorship, would help the department expand its offerings in new directions as well as sustain its existing strengths. CAP recognizes the importance of the Institut d'Avignon within the global community of scholars and appreciates the role that it plays in maintaining Bryn Mawr's prominence in the international scholarly world. CAP further notes the crucial role of the Institut and its graduate level curriculum in the AB/MA program that the department offers; with this new position, the directorship of the Institut d'Avignon should thus be closely integrated with the Bryn Mawr department on a continuing basis. CAP appreciates the department's flexibility in envisioning its curricular coverage, and consequently, the potential foci of research for the new hire. A focus on theater and performance studies in particular seems a logical and mutually beneficial scholarly complement to the role of the director of the Institut d'Avignon. Such a focus would also allow the new hire to establish new connections between the department of French and Francophone Studies and other departments and programs at the college, such as Theater and the Center for Visual Culture. CAP urges the department to make every effort to seek out scholars from diverse backgrounds. In recruiting applicants, the department should signal its willingness, as expressed in the proposal, to support scholars as they grow into the full administrative role of the directorship.

Bi-College Department of German and German Studies, Continuing Non-Tenure Track or Tenure-Track Request

The Bi-Co Department of German and German Studies requested the hire of a tenure-track assistant professor in German and German Studies at Bryn Mawr College, preferably specializing in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century German Literature, but also with strengths in areas such as Second Language Acquisition, Romanticism, Intellectual History, Aesthetics, and German Jewish

Studies, or, in lieu of such a tenure-track line, a continuing non-tenure-track position. The Bi-Co Department would like a colleague with a strong intellectual background in German Studies and areas of specialization that would suggest potential for interdisciplinary collaborations (including but not restricted to comparative literature, history of art, linguistics, visual studies, and philosophy). The new colleague would teach at all levels of the program, contribute to curricular development and be proactive in establishing partnerships with programs and disciplines across the two colleges.

CAP recommends that the request from the Bi-College Department of German and German Studies for a continuing non-tenure-track position be approved as a position split between Bryn Mawr and Haverford, for the following reasons:

The reduction several years ago of two tenure lines, one from each of the Bryn Mawr and Haverford German faculties, has left the Bi-Co Department of German and German Studies in a precarious position. CAP recognizes the need for staffing in order to maintain the curriculum in German in the Bi-College community, as well as the need to ensure a Bi-College solution to the problem. In consultation with Haverford's counterpart committee, SCPC, and the Provosts of both colleges, CAP determined that a continuing non-tenure-track position split between the two colleges and housed at Bryn Mawr would best provide the necessary resources and ongoing stability for the department. Such a CNTT faculty position would be able to offer upper-level courses at Haverford and free up the tenure-line professors on both campuses to do the same. The CNTT position will meet the need currently being addressed by interim staffing, which has been funded by both colleges in recent years. The position is thus contingent on SCPC's announced agreement to support the shared position. CAP also encourages the Bi-Co Department of German and German Studies to pursue the potential for interdisciplinary connections with colleagues in other departments and programs to further enhance the resources of German Studies.

Department of Psychology, Tenure-Track Request

The Psychology Department submitted a request for a tenure-track position in Mental Health Psychology, which encompasses clinical psychology, counseling, and community psychology, to replace Professor Marc Schulz, who vacated his line in the department in 2021 to direct Data Science. Psychology has identified the wider specialty of Mental Health Psychology to keep abreast of recent developments in that field that would address the College's DEIAR priorities, to fit with existing faculty fields of research and teaching at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges, and to respond to continued, high student interest in this field. Since Mental Health Psychology as a specialization includes community interventions, often in racial and ethnic minority populations, this reconceptualization of the former tenure-track position should maximize the numbers of applicants from under-represented backgrounds or those working on DEIAR in mental health promotion.

CAP recommends that the request from the Department of Psychology for a position in Mental Health Psychology be approved for the following reasons:

Psychology has high enrollments and large numbers of majors (in '20-21, 74 senior and 52 junior majors and 707 enrollments), many of whom are especially interested in this field and the subfield of clinical psychology. In addition, with this request, Psychology has reconfigured a more traditional clinical psychology position to be in line with the most recent developments in the

developing field of Mental Health Psychology, which opens up clinical psychology to the study of community mental health in its practices and interactions with race and ethnicity. CAP was particularly impressed by the Department's investment in identifying a specialty that would attract the most diverse group of candidates and believes that the choice of mental health psychology will indeed diversify the field of candidates, some of whom the Department has already singled out for on-campus lectures. Finally, CAP notes that the department has also planned very carefully during the past years to replace retiring or departing colleagues with attention to the constitution of a future-facing department offering a panoply of intersecting specialties. Although Psychology argued that Professor Schulz vacated his line in the department when he became Director of Data Science, he remains a Professor of Psychology. However, the department hosting whichever candidate was selected for the directorship was always expected to benefit from one of the Director's data science courses. We note that one course of the tenured Psychology Professors is not serving the department, but Data Science alone, and we urge that one of Professor Schulz' courses, tagged from Data Science to Psychology, be considered a reciprocal exchange. We expect that, in the coming years, Psychology will not exceed its historical 8.0 FTE.

Department of Spanish, Tenure-Track Request

The Spanish Department submitted a request for a tenure-track position at the level of Assistant Professor, for a scholar in the field of Latin American literature. The subdisciplinary focus of the scholar would be open, but the department plans to search for candidates who could engage with at least two of the following areas: Afro-Latino Literature and Culture, Ecocriticism, Feminist and Gender Studies, Hispanophone Caribbean and its Diaspora, Immigration/Migration Literature, and/or Indigenous Studies. The department states that their ideal candidate would be equipped to contribute to several of the College's interdisciplinary programs such as Latin American, Iberian and Latino Studies, Comparative Literature, the Emily Balch seminars, Gender and Sexuality, Film Studies, Africana Studies, Environmental Studies, and International Studies. They also note that the proposed hire might incorporate a Praxis component in their courses, as the College continues strengthening our presence and contributions to the Spanish-speaking community in Greater Philadelphia.

CAP recommends that the request from the Department of Spanish for a tenure-track position be approved at the Assistant Professor level, for the following reasons:

CAP recognizes the need for improved stability in staffing of Spanish department courses overall, and, given the recent departure of two tenured faculty members, the need for tenure-track faculty to support the Spanish major. The extended absence of one faculty member prior to resignation has forced Spanish to rely on interim staffing which limited the effectiveness of the department's major recruitment efforts. As the department works to rebuild their major numbers to a level appropriate for Bryn Mawr's small language programs, which are one important criterion for future CAP decisions, CAP agrees that tenure-track faculty members should participate in teaching lower-level language courses, a responsibility that would help with major recruitment. A new tenure-track colleague will also allow for continued active participation of Spanish faculty in interdisciplinary and college-wide programs such as Comparative Literature, Latin American Iberian and Latino Studies, Gender and Sexuality, Emily Balch Seminars, Growth and Structure of Cities, and 360 clusters. Finally, CAP agrees with the department that the recommended search should encounter no difficulty attracting a very diverse group of applicants.