

BRYN MAWR

COLLEGE

Office of the President
101 North Merion Avenue
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

August 1, 2022

Penny Armstrong, Chair
Don Barber
Radcliffe Edmonds
Maja Šešelj
Kate Thomas

Dear Penny and CAP colleagues,

Thank you for CAP's 2021-2022 annual report and addendum, and for the Committee's thoughtful, dedicated work to support the College's mission and the strength of our liberal arts curriculum. I appreciate the Committee's care for the intellectual vitality of the institution as a whole, and its consideration of the impact of its decisions for the future as well as the present. It is critical that CAP and the College think about our academic programs in this holistic and forward-looking way, and I am grateful to CAP for its leadership.

I extend my thanks to Penny Armstrong for her service as chair of CAP, as a member of the Advisory Council of the Faculty, as a faculty representative to the Board of Trustees, and for representing CAP on three external reviews of academic programs. Penny, on behalf of CAP, also partnered with the Committee on Appointments and Tim Harte to conduct exit interviews for departing faculty. Both Penny and Rad Edmonds were members of the Middle States Planning Committee, and contributed to the College's successful reaccreditation. I also wish to thank Rad for his participation on the Strategic Advisory Committee, and Don Barber for serving on the College Budget Committee and adding to that group's robust discussions. The Committee's work benefited greatly from the perspectives and work of new members Maja Šešelj and Kate Thomas. I also wish to thank Maja for her service on the Committee to Revise Faculty Bylaws.

Reflections on CAP's Mission and Goals

Over the past academic year, CAP has built on the good work of previous CAP committees as it deliberated on how to support new directions in academic priorities within the existing faculty pool. I fully support CAP's clear statement that the committee must consider the College's pool of faculty lines over multiple years so as to serve the long-term interests of the College. I offer my help to CAP in thinking about the pool in this longer-

term way and in constructing and documenting a thorough history of available positions. I also agree with CAP's advice to departments that they not rush to submit a position request immediately upon the retirement or departure of a colleague. While departures pose some challenges in the short-term, they also provide an opportunity for a department to reflect on the evolution of their discipline and of their own priorities. I support CAP's recommendation that the Provost regularly approve an interim Visiting Assistant Professor position in departments that lose a tenured or tenure-track faculty member if the department does wish to take time to reflect on its position request.

I also support CAP's effort to balance faculty resource allocations across programs to allow Bryn Mawr to continue to offer the breadth of programs that are necessary for an excellent undergraduate liberal arts curriculum. Knowledge of the history and development of departments and programs is a critical foundation for this work, and complements attention to evolution of fields and institutional priorities.

I recognize that surges in enrollment demand in some departments put pressure on course enrollments and availability. Such departments will need to address these demands in multiple ways, including examining pedagogical models and the number of major requirements; targeted use of Visiting Assistant Professors; and in consultation with CAP and the Provost, multi-year assessment of the need to add a new tenure-track position.

CAP Processes

CAP's report suggests that the streamlined processes established in 2018-2019 for proposing a faculty line have been effective, and that listening meetings have been useful to departments in choosing to put forward a proposal.

CAP also addressed the procedures established in 2012 for departments and programs that lose a junior faculty member in the initial term to reopen the search. I concur with CAP that it continues to be valuable for a department chair, the Provost, and representatives from Curriculum, CAP, and Appointments to reflect before reopening a search for an unchanged position, as it may contribute to a successful search for and retention of the next incumbent. I also agree with CAP's observation that departments and programs can benefit from considering whether reformulating a position description might benefit the program and result in better retention.

I am pleased that at the end of the academic year the Committee on Appointments, CAP, and the Provost formulated and established a process of exit interviews for faculty who leave the College and scheduled interviews this summer. I hope that the information gained in these interviews will support faculty success and retention.

Reflections on the Bi-College Relationship

CAP's multi-year efforts to align position review calendars for Bi-College and Tri-College appointments have contributed to new possibilities for productive communication and collaborative planning. Haverford's formation of its new Strategic Personnel and Curriculum Committee yielded positive outcomes this year as the two committees reviewed the position proposal from the Bi-College German Studies Department. I am hopeful that new alignments of schedule will support future collaboration and strategic thinking about our combined faculty resources.

Faculty Positions at the College

CAP continues to undertake a comprehensive review of all position requests, and to consider institutional mission and priorities, departmental needs and directions, overall faculty resources at the College and across the Bi-Co, ability to accommodate sabbatical leaves without replacements, and the College's commitment to faculty diversity. This orientation is critical to the long-term success of our academic programs and the overall well-being of our faculty. I am grateful to past and present members of CAP for this comprehensive and thoughtful approach to its work, which requires a broad understanding of our curriculum and of the work of colleagues across the College.

CAP's Responses to Position Requests

I endorse CAP's approval to reopen searches in fall 2022 for positions in Biology, Environmental Studies, and Mathematics that were vacated by junior faculty in their initial appointment periods. I also endorse CAP's approval of reopening searches in Transnational Italian Studies and International Studies in Fall 2022 as shared in CAP's July 28 addendum to its April report.

I approved CAP's recommendation of an expedited search in fall 2021 for a tenure-track position at the beginning or advanced assistant professor level in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology in light of the departure and impending departure of two senior faculty members. The search was successful, and brings the department a new colleague specializing in the art and archaeology of the Near East who will contribute to the department's vision of training students on the inter-connectedness of the Mediterranean and Near East.

I appreciate CAP's efforts to support faculty affiliated with the Africana Studies program in developing a position request for a tenure-track position that will provide focused, consistent leadership for the program. While this process has taken significant time and discussion, I am hopeful that Africana Studies will submit a strong request by late summer or early fall that in turn will allow for expedited approval and a search during the 2022-2023 academic year.

CAP did not approve conversion of a long-term interim position in the Bi-College Arts Program in Theater to a CNTT line. I support this decision, while recognizing the Theater Program's interest in continuity. The Provost will discuss possible staffing alternatives with program faculty.

I approve CAP's recommendations to conduct the following searches at the rank of Assistant Professor:

- A position in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology that will focus on the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, including the Levant, Greece, Turkey, and North Africa, up through the 4th century CE. The proposed position embodies the department's longstanding commitment to both Classical and Near Eastern archaeology and provides a new framing of offerings in Roman archaeology. The person filling this position will be able to make valuable contributions to a number of interdisciplinary and disciplinary programs at the College at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.
- A position in French in theater and performance studies, to include directorship of the Avignon program. This new field of study within the French Department will be attractive to students and will complement offerings in Theater and performance in other programs at the College. I concur that a scholar in these fields will be well-suited to lead Bryn Mawr's program in Avignon and the rich offerings of that city's annual summer Theater Festival, and will have the opportunity to build on the legacy of this outstanding summer language program.
- A position in Psychology for a scholar in mental health psychology. Enrollment demands in Psychology continue to be extremely high, and topics of mental health are of interest to our students and of importance to contemporary society. I join CAP in its appreciation of the department's effort to identify a field that would attract the most diverse field of candidates within academic psychology.
- A position in Spanish that will allow for the department to continue to participate in interdisciplinary college programs such as Latin American, Iberian, and Latino Studies; Comparative Literature; the Emily Balch Seminars; etc. I agree that the recent departure and retirement respectively of two tenured faculty members has left the department without the stable staffing to ensure strong major interest. I support the department's decision to open the search to a range of subfields within Latin American literature to attract the strongest and most diverse pool of candidates.

Finally, and contingent on Haverford's SCPC's agreement, I approve CAP's recommendation of a continuing non-tenure track position in German and German Studies shared by Bryn Mawr and Haverford. The German and German Studies program is a Bi-College one, and students on both campuses will benefit from additional coursework at the upper-level and consistent faculty presence.

CAP plays a critical role in shaping the future of the College's academic program. I am grateful for the committee's productive, collegial partnership with Provost Tim Harte and with me, and for the thoughtfulness with which it works with colleagues across the campus and within the BiCo and TriCo. This work requires a significant commitment of time and reflection, and I express my deepest appreciation for this work.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kim Cassidy".

Kimberly W. Cassidy
President