

# BRYN MAWR

## COLLEGE

June 27, 2023

Penny Armstrong, Chair  
Don Barber  
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Mike Noel  
Maja Šešelj  
Kate Thomas

Dear Penny and CAP colleagues,

Thank you for the 2022-2023 CAP Report and Addendum, and for the commitment of time and careful thought that the Committee brought to its work to support the mission and academic vitality of the College. I commend the Committee's efforts to assess immediate and long-term needs of departments as it makes recommendations about faculty lines and to inaugurate a practice of grounding its work in analysis of departmental and curricular data. These twinned approaches will be valuable to departments as they reflect on hires they wish to make and will support the Committee's holistic approach to sustaining a vibrant, diverse curriculum while also being responsive to student enrollment patterns.

I thank each member of CAP for their service to the College, beginning with chair Penny Armstrong, who completes her term this year. In addition to thanking Penny for her work leading CAP, I want to acknowledge her service as a member of the Advisory Council of the Faculty, a faculty representative to the Board of Trustees, and in representing CAP on the external review of the History Department. I appreciate the contributions of CAP members to other College-wide committees, including Maja Šešelj's membership on the College Budget Committee, Kate Thomas's work on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and Mike Noel's and Penny Armstrong's shared service on one of the Strategic Planning work groups.

### **Reflections on CAP's Mission and Role**

This year CAP has deepened its understanding of the information it will need to support its multiple goals of discerning possible trajectories of curricular trends, supporting a diverse liberal arts curriculum, and ensuring continuity of instruction. To complement these committee efforts, CAP encouraged departments to think about aspirations for the size of their programs, and to shift to thinking about faculty lines as an institutional resource

rather than permanently assigned to a department. In pursuing this work, CAP has articulated its need for better data- for example, about the ratio of tenure/ tenure-track to interim faculty over time and the history of department faculty staffing and requests. I agree wholeheartedly.

While I am grateful for the effort of the Provost's Office staff to begin the work of collecting departmental data, going forward CAP will also benefit from partnering with the Institutional Research Office to support and manage its development of faculty data. Institutional Research staff will provide support in the form of uniform, accurate data, analytical expertise, and access to additional data relevant to CAP's goals.

I want to underscore my continuing strong support of CAP's clearly stated principle that faculty lines are part of a College pool, and CAP's embrace of a multi-year approach to considering the ways in which this pool of lines will be used. I concur with CAP that the Provost's approval of multi-year interim contracts can be helpful in supporting current teaching needs as departments consider the type and pacing of hires they wish to make and the types of courses they wish to teach to major and non-major students.

### **New Tenure-Track Lines**

I recognize the significant enrollment pressures that CAP discusses in its report and that are confirmed by course enrollment information from the Registrar. Thanks to the careful management of the endowment and College budgets, and the success of fundraising, the College is fortunate to have resources that allowed me and Tim to propose the addition of two new tenure-track lines in this year's budget proposal. I am pleased that the Board of Trustees approved. I thank CAP members for their effort to work with the faculty to move thoughtfully but with a sense of urgency to define and approve these new lines so that searches can move forward in 2023-2024. While the timetable for proposing, approving, and searching is atypical, it is important that we act to meet the pressing needs of students who have become challenged in fulfilling their course of study and of departments that are especially burdened with over-enrollments.

### **CAP Processes**

I support CAP's ongoing efforts to manage the workload of the committee while remaining responsive to requests from departments for a listening meeting following submission of a letter of intent. These discussions are important to ongoing dialogue between the faculty and CAP and to developing shared understanding of both departmental and broader institutional perspectives. I also encourage CAP to continue to remain flexible in its processes such that CAP can be responsive to departmental/program challenges and opportunities.

I also endorse the continuing practice of allowing departments and programs to reopen searches for a junior faculty member if an individual departs in the initial term and the position description remains unchanged. Reflection following the departure of a colleague

is of course important, but we also need to value the significant work that a department has already put into a position proposal for a continuing need.

As CAP notes, coordination with the Curriculum Committee is very important as the latter considers proposals for new programs and majors. Additions to the curriculum cannot be made without ensuring that the College has the faculty resources to support the proposed program. The regular consultations proposed by CAP will contribute to achieving this goal. Finally, I thank the Provost and the chairs of Appointments and CAP for the time and care they devoted to faculty exit interviews during the summer of 2022, and their efforts to respect individual faculty's desire for confidentiality while responding to the Faculty's wish to identify any underlying issues that might have led to an unusual number of departures. While the exit interviews did not point to a common cause, the range of information gathered can help departments, the Provost, and the College as a whole support our faculty colleagues.

### **The Bi-College Relationship**

Changes that Haverford has adopted in its timetable to propose new faculty positions to the Strategic Personnel and Curriculum Committee have created valuable opportunities for consultation and strategic planning between the two colleges. Sustaining and deepening such discussions is critical to the potential of Bi-College collaboration to offer a rich array of curricular opportunities to our students and to maximize the use of our collective resources.

### **CAP's Response to Position Requests**

I support CAP's recommendation to the Provost that the Department of Physics search for the next Bucher-Jackson Fellow in the area of biophysics.

I approved CAP's recommendation of an expedited search in fall 2022 for a tenure-track position at the associate or advanced assistant professor level in the Africana Studies Program. As CAP notes, this position is intended to be a cornerstone for this interdisciplinary program, which draws courses and faculty involvement from across the College. I am pleased that the expedited search was successful.

I support CAP's recommendation of a continuing non-tenure track position in the Department of Physics to teach the introductory course sequence and non-Physics majors, including setting up and teaching multiple laboratory sections. I agree that as defined, this position offers an efficient way to serve students in introductory courses and creates opportunities for tenured and tenure-track faculty to offer more courses at advanced and graduate levels.

CAP did not approve the conversion of an interim lecturer position in the Department of Computer Science to a continuing non-tenure track position. I appreciate the Provost's effort to respond to the department's staffing needs with a multi-year interim contract

while also noting that collection and analysis of enrollment data will be important to CAP's focus on discerning ongoing demand in its allocation of positions.

CAP sent a request from the Department of Growth and Structure of Cities for a part-time continuing visiting lectureship to anchor GIS instruction to the Provost as CAP does not consider visiting positions. I am pleased that the Provost has approved a three-year part-time position to meet this important curricular need.

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

- A position in the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research to provide instruction in at least two required content areas of the MSS program and to supervise doctoral students. The areas of potential expertise and research practice identified by the School will complement existing areas of faculty strength.
- A position in the Department of Philosophy in the areas of Philosophy of Science, Epistemology or Comparative Philosophy, each broadly conceived. As members of CAP note, the Department seeks to broaden its search to serve both the needs of the discipline and to diversify its candidate pool. I support these goals and emphasize CAP's observation that an external review recommended a hire in Comparative Philosophy.
- A position in the Department of Spanish in 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> century Spanish Peninsular Literature and Culture. I concur that an appointment in this field will add stability to the department, allow tenure-track faculty in the department to teach at all levels of the curriculum, and help build student interest in courses beyond the lower-level language courses. The possible fields of specialization noted by the department are of significant interest to current students and would complement offerings in other departments.

I also endorse CAP's approval to reopen a search in fall 2023 for an assistant professor position in Philosophy that has been vacated by a junior faculty member in their initial appointment period.

CAP recommended the following searches at the rank of Assistant or early Associate Professor, and I concur. These are:

- A position in the Department of Literatures in English in African American and/ or African diasporic literatures. I concur with CAP's assessment that it is important to prioritize a search in this field to ensure coverage in the department and to contribute to the program in Africana Studies.

- A position in the Department of Psychology in Cultural Psychology. In addition to ongoing general enrollment pressures across the department, there is also strong student demand for coursework in cultural psychology. Appointment of a scholar-teacher in this field will also contribute to one or more other programs at the College that study the effects of cultural process and norms on underrepresented, underserved populations.

Finally, CAP engaged in spring listening sessions with the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research about the configuration of a position that would meet pressing staffing needs at the School and contribute to the program in Gender and Sexuality Studies. These were productive conversations that reflect the College's support of graduate education that also benefits the Undergraduate College.

I close by reiterating my deep appreciation to CAP members for their work as a committee and with fellow faculty members to support the present and future academic vitality and strength of the College. I am grateful for the Committee's collegial, consultative partnership with Provost Tim Harte and me, with departments proposing positions, and with other faculty committees, here and at Haverford. The time and thought that you have brought to this important work are vital to the College.

With best wishes,



Kimberly W. Cassidy  
President