

*Committee on Academic Priorities*

Kate Thomas, *Literatures in English*, 2021-22 – 2024-25, *Chair*, 2023-2024

Astrid Lindenlauf, *Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology*, 2022-23 – 2026-27

Michael Noel, *Physics*, 2022-23 – 2026-27

Adrienne Prettyman, *Philosophy*, 2023-24 – 2026-27

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

Cindy Sousa, *Social Work and Social Research*, 2023-24 – 2026-27

# BRYN MAWR

October 24, 2023

Dear Colleagues:

CAP has received letters of intent requesting positions this year from seven departments: Chemistry; Greek, Latin, and Classical Studies; History; History of Art; Literatures in English; Physics; Transnational Italian Studies. These letters are attached below. Please contact any of these writers of letters of intent to whose conversations you would like to contribute as they go on to develop their full position request. Please also contact CAP to express a particular interest in and/or reaction to any of these position requests, as they relate to your own department's evolving curriculum or the College's curriculum as a whole.

Best,

Kate (for CAP)

Kate Thomas  
K. Laurence Stapleton Professor of Literatures in English  
Department of Literatures in English  
Bryn Mawr College

Department of Chemistry  
101 N. Merion Avenue  
Bryn Mawr College  
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania 19010-2899  
Phone: 610-526-5137  
E-mail: [jgoldsmith@brynmawr.edu](mailto:jgoldsmith@brynmawr.edu)

# B R Y N M A W R

October 13, 2023

Dear Colleagues on the Committee on Academic Priorities:

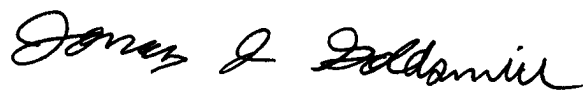
This letter signals the intent of the Chemistry Department to submit a proposal to the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP) for a tenure-track faculty member in the area of inorganic chemistry. This request is occasioned by the upcoming retirement (a signed retirement agreement is in place) of Sharon Burgmayer, who has been a professor of inorganic chemistry at the College for almost 40 years.

Inorganic chemistry is one of the four subdisciplines of the field (along with organic chemistry, physical chemistry and biochemistry) and is critical to the education of chemists. Coursework in inorganic chemistry is required by the American Chemical Society, our professional organization, to offer an accredited degree in chemistry. The successful candidate will build a dynamic, independent research program, compete for external grant support, teach introductory and advanced courses in inorganic chemistry and contribute to our upper-level lab courses. This new colleague will also contribute to the teaching of our introductory curriculum according to their particular expertise.

The proposed position is crucial to the College's mission and strategic directions as without it, we would not be able to offer the major in chemistry. As described above, inorganic chemistry is a key area of the field. This position would also support teaching efforts in our introductory curriculum, which is a key part of the biology major, the biochemistry and molecular biology major, the pre-medical curriculum, the neuroscience major and other programs at the College.

We look forward to meeting with CAP in the spring to discuss this proposal.

Sincerely,



Jonas I. Goldsmith on behalf of the Chemistry Department  
Associate Professor and Chair of Chemistry

# BRYN MAWR

## COLLEGE

Professor Kate Thomas  
Chair, Committee on Academic Priorities  
Bryn Mawr College

September 27, 2023

Dear Kate and members of CAP,

With this letter, we express our intent to apply for a tenure track position in the department of Greek, Latin, and Classical Studies.

We would like to attract candidates who can teach the core areas of Latin poetry—Virgil, Ovid etc.—but who also work in the burgeoning area of classical reception, which studies not just the use but the misuse of the so-called classical tradition; it lends itself well to a public humanities focus. Traditional Latin poetry remains important both for attracting students and for the graduate program, while the field of reception is drawing in more students from different backgrounds and interests.

These two areas of expertise are crucial for supporting programs of study across the Graduate Group (GGACHA). At undergraduate level, a smart hire should support MECANA, Africana, and International Studies; it should certainly support CompLit; and, depending on the focus of the successful candidate, History (given the absence of anyone covering ancient cultures) and Religion are also potential points of connection.

The timetable for our request is odd: we apologize. In July 2022, our colleague Annette Baertschi took an unexpected leave of absence to take up a position in Switzerland. She has until January 1, 2024 to decide whether she will return to Bryn Mawr and as yet, despite inquiries, has given us no sense of her inclinations. We ask permission, therefore, to submit a full application for the position as soon as possible after January 1—assuming, that is, that Annette is not planning to return.

Moreover, we gather that position requests, once granted, may now result in expedited searches. All preliminary rounds of interviews in our field are now conducted on Zoom, and have no set timetable. If a decision is made quickly, we would very much like permission to start the search immediately, before the end of this academic year, so that we can have someone in the position by fall 2024. This is now the second year in which the department has had only two permanent professors in place, rather than four or five, and, while we have been grateful for substantial (and excellent) interim support, we would like to move to a more stable situation as soon as possible.

With thanks and best wishes



Catherine Conybeare, Chair  
On behalf of the department

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Bryn Mawr College  
101 North Merion Avenue  
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610 526 5037  
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# B R Y N M A W R

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Professor Kate Thomas, Chair, CAP  
FROM: Ignacio Gallup-Diaz, Chair, History Department  
RE: Letter of Intent, History/Gender & Sexuality

October 13, 2023

I am writing to convey my department's intent to submit a proposal/request to carry out a search for a Modern US historian. Planning for the position has emerged through close consultation with Professor Anita Kurimay, Chair of the Gender and Sexuality program; the position would be 'shared' with or 'divided' between History and the G/S program.

This position will fill the lacuna in the College curriculum created by the retirement of Professor Sharon Ullman while also bolstering the program in Gender and Sexuality. Courses in Modern US History have constituted a cornerstone of the College curriculum, serving both our majors and the entire student community. Modern US undergirds a Bi-College curricular and intellectual framework that has been in place and evolving since the College's founding.

The field has not only been central to the History department's curriculum; Ullman's well-enrolled courses have also made consistent and meaningful contributions to the Gender and Sexuality program (as well as Political Science, Health Studies, and Sociology programs). Ullman's engagement with the Gender and Sexuality program spanned her thirty-year career, and 'sharing' the position between History and Gender and Sexuality also reflects developments in the fields.

Filling this position will ameliorate disruptions in course-delivery and programming for the History department, and will assist other colleagues engaged in research, knowledge-production, and teaching in the modern and contemporary periods.

My colleagues in the History department and I are ready and happy to address any questions or concerns that you may have.

# BRYN MAWR

COLLEGE

To: The Members of the Committee on Academic Priorities, Bryn Mawr College  
From: Hoday King, Chair, Department of History of Art  
Date: October 13, 2023

I write as Chair of History of Art to request a full-time Continuing Non-Tenure Track position in the Department of History of Art. The position would entail teaching and administrative responsibilities to the department as well as programs such as the Center for Visual Culture, Film Studies, and Museum Studies. Thank you for your consideration; I welcome all feedback.

Sincerely,

Hoday King  
Chair and Professor on the Marie Neuberger Fund for the Study of the Arts  
Department of History of Art, Bryn Mawr College

Department of Literatures in English  
Bryn Mawr College  
101 North Merion Avenue  
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610-526-5306

# B R Y N M A W R

October 2, 2023

Dear Members of the Committee on Academic Priorities:

The Literatures in English Department proposes to search for an Assistant Professor who can teach courses and direct theses in Asian American and/or Pacific Islander literatures.

## Current State of the Department

The Literatures in English Department has been operating at a severe FTE deficit for several years. In the last three years we lost three full tenure-track FTEs, leaving us down four. Michael Tratner's death in August 2021 was quickly followed by Mecca Sullivan's departure in December 2021, and Linda-Susan Beard retired at the end of last academic year. We hired one tenure-track faculty two years ago (which brought our FTE deficit from four to three). Pardis Dabashi is an expert in film studies and modernism, and her courses make offerings in both Literatures in English and Film more historically and globally robust. We are hiring again this year, in African American or African Diaspora, (which will bring our FTE deficit from three to two).

This proposed hire in Asian-American and/or Pacific Islander literatures will bring our deficit from two to one, and will continue our renovations of the department into one that helps decolonize a field that developed under colonial and Anglo/Eurocentric conditions.

## Importance of the Position

This line will provide crucial support for the department's global focus on Anglophone diasporic literatures, expanding both the kinds of texts our students read and the methodologies they use to read them. Moreover, the position will help resolve curricular gaps here and throughout the Bi- and Tri-Co. Last year, Bakirathi Mani left Swarthmore and Raji Mohan retired from Haverford, leaving huge gaps in the Tri-Co's offerings of post-colonial and Asian, and Asian Diaspora literatures. Haverford has hired Elizabeth Kim, who is a specialist in Asian American but who splits her teaching between Creative Writing and English. This means that

there is only one-half FTE dedicated to this field in the entire Tri-Co, which is a woeful underrepresentation, especially when the Tri-Co Asian American Studies Program offers a minor in Asian American Studies at all three colleges.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to following up with a fuller proposal and discussion with CAP. We would like to have a listening meeting when the time comes. Sincerely on behalf of the Literatures in English Department,

Bethany Schneider,  
Associate Professor and Chair, Literatures in English

# BRYN MAWR

## COLLEGE

October 13, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

The Department of Physics intends to submit a request to CAP for a full-time Tenure-Track position in Physics. This request is in response to our colleague Kate Daniel's decision to take a faculty position at the University of Arizona. To create the most diverse field of candidates possible, we plan to keep the search open to any experimental, theoretical, or computational physicist, from any sub-field.

The Department of Physics has a dual goal of providing a comprehensive physics education to the students of Bryn Mawr as well as offering cutting-edge research opportunities. The department serves a wide variety of student populations at the college including both undergraduate majors and non-majors, postbaccalaureate pre-med students, and graduate students. Given the commitments to these populations, the current faculty number allows the department to fulfil our goals while maintaining an efficient level of human resources. Given the nature of the physics curriculum, this new faculty member will be expected to teach a wide range of subjects at all levels from non-major to graduate. Seeking a new tenure-track faculty member to offset the departure of Kate Daniel will allow the department to maintain its dedication to these teaching efforts both at the College itself, and more broadly to the Bi-Co as well.

Moreover, maintaining the number of tenure-track faculty in physics is crucial for maximizing the opportunities for our students to participate in a wide variety of research areas. Participation in research is vital for students who want to pursue a career in physics. Not only does experience in research provide tools helpful in the classroom, it also opens pathways for future opportunities, through work-relevant building of skills, confidence-building ownership of projects, and network-building connections through attendance at collaboration meetings and conferences. The research program built by a tenure-track faculty member also increases opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration at the college. Physics has a strong history of research collaborations across departments, including our most recent hire which has spurred work between physics and biology and prompted the procurement of a state-of-the-art tool—a confocal microscope—that serves multiple research programs on campus.

Despite many recent initiatives in the physics community to improve the diversity of its constituency, the percentage of women and under-represented minorities remains woefully low. This is in large part due to the relatively low numbers of faculty positions held by members of these groups. By approaching the search broadly, rather than seeking any particular specialization in physics sub-field or in theoretical versus experimental focus, the pool of high-quality candidates can be made as diverse as is feasible. The department aims to find an excellent candidate for this position as well as maximize the chances that this candidate will improve the diversity of physics faculty and maximize the chances for interdisciplinary avenues of research at the College.

We look forward to CAP's consideration of this letter of intent.

Sincerely,



David Schaffner  
Associate Professor and Chair  
Department of Physics



# BRYN MAWR

## COLLEGE

October 10, 2023

Dear Colleagues on the Committee on Academic Priorities (CAP) at BMC and on the Strategic Curriculum and Personnel Committee at HC,

The Department of Transnational Italian Studies has undergone a number of exciting curricular transformations in the last few years since our last proposal to CAP (AY 2016-17) for a tenure track position. These major crucial changes have included:

1. the new name of the department approved by the Curriculum Committee in AY 2020-21 to mirror our new curricular direction;
2. the hiring in Fall 2023 of Luca Zipoli (Ph.D., Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa) as Assistant Professor of Modern Italian Studies (a scholar who privileges the intersections of fields such as history and visual arts, comparative literature and trans-medial studies, book history and gender studies with a specific focus on otherness);
3. the creation of several new truly interdisciplinary, cross-listed courses, such as:
  - a. [“The Italian Margins: Places and Identities”](#) (ITAL B332) affiliated with [the Flexner 2023 Lectureship](#), tagged with Praxis, Comparative Literature, Gender and Sexuality, Writing Intensive, and meeting the new “Power, Inequity, Justice” college requirement;
  - b. “Diversity, Gender, and Queerness in Modern Italian Poetry” (ITAL B324);
  - c. [“Creating Classics”](#) co-taught with Ava Shirazi (Classics, HC);
  - d. “Black, Queer, Jewish Italy” (ITAL B312) affiliated with [the Flexner 2021 Lectureship](#) (“Fred Moten, Hesitant Sociology: Blackness and Poetry”)
  - e. “Mountaineering Heroes: Masculinity and Nation-building” (ITAL B316);
  - f. E-Sem Courses offered for four years: “Short Stories” (2019); “Locked up” (2020); “Al Dente! The Italian Culture of Food” (2021); “What the Hell? Dante Reimagined” (2023);
  - g. “Stories, Fantasies, and Maps of the Silk Road”, a course within the 360° Program (cancelled due to Covid-19).

We have been revolutionizing our department’s language pedagogy both in practice and concept, re-shaping our syllabi and producing a high volume of new original pedagogical resources: a sequence of 35 review classes based on songs, a new set of in-class materials beyond textbooks, inclusive activities based on gender-inclusive linguistics, a year-long program of tasks that produced a wide archive of multimedia artifacts by students, etc. The culminating effort of this full re-styling is [the new original open textbook](#), funded by four digital grants awarded by HC (\$15,000) and BMC (\$6,000) libraries, which makes language instruction affordable and accessible, overcoming the inherent biases of available commercial textbooks in terms of race, gender identity, and ability.

This free [OER elementary textbook, titled \*Voci\*](#), fosters an inclusive classroom and provides an accurate portrayal of contemporary Italian culture, by including current topics such as the changing standards of femininity and masculinity, racial discrimination in Italy, the struggle for citizenship of Afro-Italians, and the LGBTQIA+ rights. In addition, it has permitted two Bi-Co students to actively participate in the selection of the units’ content and in the realization of the online Haverford PressBook platform. Their perspective has increased proportionally to the numbers of Major and Minor students in Italian at HC (including Mellon Mays undergraduate fellows). In Spring 2023, in fact, we had 8 seniors graduating in Italian, two from BMC and six from HC, whose student body represents 50% of our students in Italian.

# BRYN MAWR

## COLLEGE

Our main goal is to be able to continue to offer our new interdisciplinary and diverse courses at the 200 and 300 level while keeping on working on the accessibility, inclusivity, and excellence of our renovated 000 and 100 language classes, which are based on gender-inclusive linguistics and reflect current issues. In order to fuel and strengthen this academic renewal, which benefits both our diverse student body and the numerous Bi-Co programs and departments with which we actively collaborate, we are writing to request the conversion of one of our two current Interim positions into a CNTT, which will be financed by both HC and BMC (as the current interim already is). The ideal candidate will excel in language inclusive and queer pedagogy with the following main responsibilities:

1. coordinating our language sequence and placement both at Haverford and Bryn Mawr;
2. directing our TAs training workshop;
3. establishing new Bi-Co study-abroad, exchange, and internship programs in Italy and Italian transnational communities (e.g. Italian ex-colonies and diasporic areas);
4. leading a second OER textbook project for ITAL 101 and 102 (second year Italian) to promote justice, equity, and inclusion by lowering the financial burden of BIPOC, low-income, and first-generation college students;
5. securing the completion and constant update of our current open-source textbook, keeping on developing the original material that we have been creating for the language sequence, and ensuring that the high enrollments in our language courses do not result in over-crowded classes—as it has been happening in the past few years (with multiple sections well over the cap);
6. offering courses in another language or in inter-languages disciplines (translatology, dialectology, comparative philology, postcolonial history of European languages, inclusive language pedagogy, Queer language pedagogy) that are currently not regularly offered in the Bi-Co curriculum.

Please note that Bryn Mawr College is the only campus within the Tri-Co community that offers ITAL courses both in the target language and in translation (with an extra hour in Italian for students who take the course in translation. For the record, this extra hour has never been compensated).

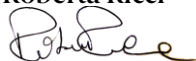
It is simply impossible to maintain our commitment to diversity and interdisciplinarity active while relying exclusively on interims to cover some of our language sections on both campuses. A stable Lecturer teaching at both colleges would make our efforts sustainable on the long term. They would allow us to expand our commitment to fields of study and teaching that are traditionally beyond the scope of Italian Studies through courses and initiatives that cannot be materially pursued if one must at the same time coordinate a language sequence, constantly hire and supervise new interim lecturers, direct a very rich program of extracurricular language activities, and teach multiple language classes 4 days a week.

In conclusion, a CNTT in our department would join analogous figures in Arabic, Chinese, French, Spanish, German, and Russian, opening the way for exciting opportunities of synergy and collaborations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Roberta Ricci



Professor and Chair of Italian on the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Chair in the Humanities