

BRYN MAWR

COLLEGE

July 10, 2019

Michael Allen
Tamara Davis
Jonas Goldsmith, Chair of the Committee on Academic Priorities
Tim Harte
Jamie Taylor
Dianna Xu

Dear Jonas and CAP colleagues,

Thank you for your exceptional commitment to the work of CAP this year. Through continued development of its strategic approach to addressing academic priorities and through the recommendations it makes for faculty searches, CAP carries critical responsibility for shaping the profile of the faculty and the nature of the curriculum now and into the future. The Committee's report reflects both the careful thought with which you carried out these responsibilities, and your efforts to serve the institution as a whole. I am grateful to Jonas for his leadership of the committee this year and for his collaborative approach to working with me and with Mary Osirim on behalf of CAP. I also appreciate the time and service Jonas has given as a representative to the Chair's Advisory Group and as faculty representative to both the Board of Trustees and to the Strategic Advisory Group. I also wish to extend my thanks to Jamie Taylor for her contributions to the Strategic Advisory Group's discussions this year; I look forward to working with her as chair of CAP in 2019-2020. Tim and Tamara finish their terms on CAP this year, and I want to express my gratitude for the wisdom that each of them have brought to discussion and decision-making. Finally, I want to recognize the contributions of Dianna Xu, both to CAP and to the College Budget Committee, and of Michael Allen, who brings valuable attention to global perspectives in CAP's work.

Reflections on CAP's Mission and Goals

CAP continues to engage in thoughtful reflection about how to pursue its charge in a forward-looking fashion. I concur that CAP must take a long and broad review of changes in fields of knowledge and changes in student (and faculty) interests as it assesses requests for faculty positions and as it helps to position the College to continue to thrive in the medium- and long-term in what is a tight competitive landscape and a challenging time for liberal arts colleges. I support CAP's proposal to gain flexibility by not automatically renewing all positions. Although such decisions are difficult, I agree that we must engage in the hard work of setting priorities and of cutting back resources

in some areas in order to support evolving goals. I also affirm that in considering such a course of action, careful consultation with the department, provost, and president are critical, as are assessing opportunities to address curricular and student needs through collaboration with our BiCo, TriCo, and Quaker Consortium colleagues.

I urge CAP to continue to look at open positions with a holistic lens of how such positions might serve emerging or multiple needs. CAP has expressed a desire to have a few positions that allow them some flexibility to provide resources to emerging areas of study. Since the size of the student body is largely constant and thus likewise the size of the faculty, these positions will mostly need to be created through existing faculty lines. However, the additional new position in International Studies also offers such an opportunity. There are few constraints in terms of what departments and programs it might serve, as long as the focus of the position is global in nature. I note that this was also true for the recently filled new faculty line that was restricted only by a focus on STEM fields.

Reflections on the Bi-College Relationship

I appreciate CAP's interest in building practices and policies to support curricular richness and strategic use of resources through collaboration between Bryn Mawr and Haverford. I recognize that structural and process differences can get in the way of attempts to pursue joint work between departments or between planning groups such as CAP and Haverford's EPC. The presidents and provosts of both colleges have heard these concerns, and we want to work with the faculty to remove such barriers wherever possible.

In my experience, presidential fiat is a poor vehicle for changing culture. I am eager to hear more from the faculty about how we can better support them in building relationships with Haverford counterparts. Practices that have been helpful to the presidents and the provosts in identifying opportunities for joint work have been regular meetings each semester to share information and identify specific opportunities that would benefit from a Bi-College approach, joint planning for how to achieve our collaborative goals, and frequent check-ins during implementation of initiatives. Mary Osirim and I are happy to meet with CAP, and in turn with Haverford counterparts, to discuss other policies or practices that could support effective departmental or institutional collaboration.

Recommendations for Faculty Searches

I support CAP's revised procedures for requesting tenure-track and continuing non-tenure track lines. The proposed changes will streamline work for CAP, Curriculum Committee, the Provost's Office staff, and departments requesting positions, while preserving transparency and opportunities for dialogue between these faculty committees and the departments. I look forward to hearing from CAP about the impact of these changes in your 2019-2020 report.

I appreciate CAP's attention to institutional strategic priorities and impact on college resources in its assessment of proposals that it reviewed this year. I encourage CAP to continue to take this institutional perspective in its work. This approach clearly informed CAP's review and recommendations to fill our three postdoctoral fellow positions. Appointment of a neuroscientist to the Bucher-Jackson Postdoctoral Fellowship helps respond to student interest in studying neuroscience at a time when two senior faculty at Bryn Mawr have retired or will soon do so, and when Bryn Mawr and Haverford are exploring how the two colleges can best support this field within the curriculum. A postdoctoral appointment in Roman history and archaeology will offer similar bridging support with the retirement of a long-time colleague and contribute to the offerings of two departments. Finally, I am pleased that CAP has allowed the provost to oversee the Consortium on Faculty Diversity postdoctoral fellowship and that this search will focus on a specialist in Middle Eastern History.

I also commend CAP for its attention to the impact of its decisions in advancing diversity among our faculty and within the curriculum. In this way, CAP contributes to the College's broad efforts to address institutional and structural bias. With respect to faculty searches, CAP has continued to recommend that position ads be written as broadly as possible to increase the diversity of applicant pools.

Positions Recommended by CAP

I approve CAP's recommendations to conduct the following:

- Tenure-Track search at the rank of Assistant Professor:
 - A position in Biology, for a scholar in physiology; while the search will be relatively open in terms of field, the new faculty member will offer a human or vertebrate physiology course on an annual basis. I agree with CAP's suggestion that future proposals from Biology should consider Neuroscience as a focus.
 - A position in Computer Science (approved earlier --- fall 2018). I regret that the department's search for this position failed in 2018-2019, and I endorse their plan for launching a search early in 2019-2020.
 - A position in Dance, following an external review (recommended by CAP in December and approved that month). I am very pleased that the Department was successful in pursuing an opportunity hire for this position and that there will be no gap in tenure-track faculty leadership of the program following Linda Caruso Haviland's retirement. I endorse CAP's expectation that this new faculty member will streamline use of contingent faculty, as described in the position proposal, and institute longer term contracts where possible and appropriate. I also concur that this new faculty member should articulate a vision for the program's relationship to the BiCo.

- Two positions in Economics: one for a scholar in development economics and a second for an applied microeconomist, broadly construed. I support the department's proposal to keep the field open for an applied microeconomist, and I endorse CAP's expectations that the department will not duplicate areas of expertise already existing in the Bi-Co and that it will seek maximum diversity in its candidate pool. I understand that the department has decided to conduct a search for a development economist in 2019-2020 and an applied microeconomist in 2020-2021.
- A position in Philosophy for a scholar whose expertise complements existing strengths of the department and, in addition, does not duplicate expertise found in the Haverford philosophy department. I appreciate the department's interest in maximizing the strength and diversity of the pool through this relatively open search. I also value the strong contributions that members of the department have made to College programs such as the Balch Seminars and the 360° Program. I agree with CAP that appointment of a fourth tenure-track faculty member will make the department "leave proof" under normal circumstances.
- A position in Psychology for a scholar in social psychology. I support the Department's intention to search broadly for a social psychologist to increase the diversity of the candidate pool.
- Continuing Non-Tenure Track position
 - I note that after careful deliberation, CAP has moved a line that previously resided in German to a CNTT position in Computer Science to improve access to the introductory curriculum and to provide more robust and consistent offerings to majors and minors. I concur that it is important to the College's mission and its commitment to women's advancement in STEM that we expand our capacity to meet student demand in Computer Science, both for those wishing to pursue advanced study in the department and those who seek to use computer science in related fields such as data science.

I recognize the impact of this decision on BiCo offerings in German, and the work that the remaining faculty members at Bryn Mawr and Haverford are taking on to reimagine ways that we can serve students at the two colleges who wish to pursue German language and German studies. I hope that the suggestions from the consultants from the MLA regarding a reimagined German Studies Program will be helpful to the department as we move forward. I support discussions with the other institutions in the Quaker Consortium to contribute to meeting student demand and to provide additional scholarly community to BiCo faculty in German.

Position Recommended by CAP and by EPC

I approve CAP and EPC's joint recommendation to conduct a tenure-track search at the rank of Assistant Professor for a position in Education in Urban Education or a related field. I concur with CAP's expectation that the new faculty member teach both core and advanced courses in the education program, in particular to reduce the reliance upon adjunct faculty teaching core courses.

Thank you again for your thoughtful deliberations, your hard work, and your commitment to the College. I look forward to our continued partnership.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kim Cassidy
President

cc: Provost Mary Osirim