

MEMORANDUM

To: Joan Stewart, President

David Paris, VPAA/Dean of the Faculty

From: David Bailey, for the Committee on Academic Policy

Subject: Recommendations on faculty allocation requests for AY 2006-07

Date: June 7, 2006

This report contains the recommendations of the Committee on Academic Policy (CAP) regarding the allocation requests presented to it this spring. These recommendations were made in the context of the Committee having just completed a broad review and evaluation of the allocation process. Following is a summary of the results and recommendations of this review. This information is included in this report in order to provide context for the following allocation recommendations, and as a working template for future CAPs.

Guiding Principles for CAP Allocation Process:

1. Take a long-term approach to assessing, and allocating, academic resources. Make it more of a “planning” process rather than a “reactionary” process.
2. Evaluate academic needs in the context of specific goals articulated in institutional strategic plans, and in the context of the broad liberal arts mission of the College. (This assumes that the College will institute a regular Strategic Planning process that will involve all sectors of the community, in all stages of the process).
4. When a retirement is announced, automatically send a letter to the department chair, telling the chair to initiate the Departmental Planning process.
5. Hesitate to create new programs, or split departments
6. Try to reduce departmental concentration requirements wherever possible.
7. Continue to invite department chairs/representatives to meet with the committee to discuss their allocation requests.
8. In the event of an unplanned vacancy of a faculty position, or if the internal Departmental Planning is inadequate, automatically recommend a one-year replacement or a one-year hold on the allocation of the position.
9. All vacancies are eligible for reallocation.

Proposed Structural Changes to the Allocation Process

1. April 10 is the absolute deadline for allocation requests. Any request received after this date will not be evaluated by the CAP until April of the following year.
2. Relevant institutional data will be made available to chairs for allocation proposals.
3. Standard allocation files will be created for each department/program. The file will include a minimum of a five-year history of departmental enrollments, faculty and staff resources, grade distributions, and numbers of concentrators, as well as comparable information from ~10 peer institutions.
4. The VP/DOF, C&D, and/or department chairs must consult with the CAP before going after outside funding for faculty positions.
5. The CAP will publish its allocation guidelines and annual allocation recommendations.

Hierarchy of Criteria to be Considered in the Allocation Process

1. Curricular Merit (CAP's priority is curriculum)
 - Demonstrated long term curricular planning by department.
 - Consideration of possible shifts among current faculty.
 - Assessment of the department's role in/ contribution to/ the college wide curriculum.
 - Cross listing of courses with other departments with similar curricular needs / interests.
 - Careful examination of the nature/structure of the concentration.
 - Departmental commitment to student learning outcomes/ program assessment.
2. Long-term Personnel Planning
 - Demonstrated long term personnel planning by department (planning for leaves, retirements, unexpected vacancies, outside grant funded positions)
3. Supporting Contextual Data
 - Majors/FTE
 - Enrollment pressure
 - Student evaluations / Grade distributions
 - Comparison with 10 of 15 peer institutions

Responses to Individual Allocation Requests:

Africana Studies:

The Africana Studies program requests an additional tenure-track position in order to stabilize the program and to take advantage of a diversity hiring opportunity. The Committee was impressed by the thoughtfulness of the planning and the effectiveness of the presentation our colleagues in Africana Studies brought to this proposal. We believe, however, that it is probably premature to reallocate a position to Africana Studies at this time. The department consists of a colleague on part-time, temporary reassignment to the program, another colleague with one year of experience here now, and another colleague just hired. We believe it is important for the personnel to acquire further experience with the effect of their recent curricular changes. We also believe it is very important to involve the most recently hired colleague (Westmaas) in the discussion of how the program will continue to develop. We also note that enrollments in upper level courses are very low currently; a future request for reallocation will be strengthened if enrollments in these courses become more ample. Finally, we suggest that a future request for a reallocated position might be strengthened by a proposal for the hiring of someone whose discipline is located outside the social sciences. We note that one of our concerns about this proposal was that its focus (the African diaspora in Europe) seemed to be secondary to the desirability of hiring a particular individual candidate for whom this was a principal research area.

Anthropology:

The Anthropology Department requests the continued allocation of the remaining tenure track line that become open last year due to the retirements of Henry Rutz and Doug Raybeck, and the resignation of Ann Frechette (Luce Position). Unfortunately, the Committee recommends that the position not be returned to the department.

Last year the CAP was “not fully convinced at this time that the Department requires the third position (which would be a sixth position in the Department) to maintain the quality of its curriculum and would like to see the outcome of next year’s searches before committing to allocate the third position back to Anthropology”. Over the past year, the Department ran successful searches for the Luce position, and for one of the two open cultural anthropology positions. In addition, as part of the Freeman Foundation grant, the department ended up hiring a third tenure-track faculty member. As a result, next year the department will consist of six full-time, tenure track faculty - an increase of 1.5 FTE since 1996. The Committee fully appreciates and understands that two of the three positions that were filled this year are grant funded positions, and that there is no guarantee that they will remain in the Anthropology the next time they become open. The Committee struggled with the question of how these positions should be weighed in determining academic needs, and in making its allocation recommendations. While the Committee was unanimous in its belief that departments and programs should not be penalized for “housing” a grant-funded FTE, the Committee also agreed that these positions could not be ignored when assessing curricular and academic needs of the institution.

While the Committee was impressed by the thoughtful planning behind the Department's proposal to modify their curriculum by hiring a biological anthropologist, in the end, the Committee concluded that there were greater academic needs in other areas, and that our students would be better served by allocating the open tenure-track position to a different program.

The Committee commends the Anthropology department for constructing a creative curricular plan, and urges them to take advantage of this unusual opportunity of having three new faculty members join them this fall. We hope the continuing members of the department will make it a priority to mentor their new colleagues, and to work with them to develop a new departmental plan.

Chemistry:

The Chemistry Department requests that the tenure-track position currently occupied by Professor Kinnel be returned to the department upon his retirement, which will take place over a two-year transitional period (2007-2009). The department requests not only that they retain the position, but that they be allowed to search for a full-time replacement next year (to start employment July 2007). While not unanimous, the committee decided to support both of these requests.

The CAP recognizes that the Chemistry Department has been extraordinarily successful over the past decade, building a program that is widely recognized as one of the premier undergraduate chemistry department's in the country. Along with the College's decision to invest in, and strengthen, the sciences (Hamilton College Strategic Plan, 2002), it is clear that this is not the time to withhold resources from a successful, and rapidly growing, science department.

The Committee fully supports the return of the Kinnel position to the department. There was some concern, however, about the timing of filling this position. Members of the Committee were concerned with letting the program grow too rapidly, without enough time for careful oversight or planning. The fact that the department will be conducting two searches next year to fill the new Research Corp. positions led some members of the committee to recommend delaying the Kinnel replacement search for one year (until 2007-2008). This would still allow for overlap in the positions before Kinnel fully retires, but would give the department time to think more carefully about a second tenure-track hire. To put it a bit more bluntly, "rushed" hires have had unfortunate consequences across the College, and particularly so within this department. Because of this, some members of the Committee felt that it would be prudent to hold off on filling this position for one year. This also would be consistent with the Committee's "guiding principle # 8" stated on page 1. On the other hand, some Committee members felt that the Chemistry Department should be given the opportunity to make the most of the opportunity provided by the Research Corp. grant, and that by delaying the search for this position, the administration would, to some degree, be applying the "brakes" at the same time it was trying to "accelerate" the program. While divided, the majority of the committee voted for allowing the department to begin their search for Kinnel's replacement next year.

Communication

Catherine Phelan, Chair of the Communication Department, requests a second full-time, tenure-track position on the grounds that this additional position would enable the department to articulate more thoroughly the distinctive disciplinary domains of human communication and mediated communication. The Committee does not support this request. The Committee notes that when Communications was transformed into a concentration in spring 2005 all of the concerned parties, including the Dean, CAP, the faculty at large, and Catherine Phelan, agreed that the concentration could be sustained by the current staff of two faculty. It strikes the CAP as too soon for changes in the field of Communication Studies to necessitate an additional full-time, tenure track position. To paraphrase the Committee's conclusion of last year, it would still be a betrayal of the faculty's understanding to approve an additional position for this department, at least for the time being.

In anticipation of future requests from the Communication Department, and in the constructive interest of clarity, the Committee wishes to make two more points. First, it urges Professor Phelan to combine her focus upon the two dominant domains of Communication Studies with course offerings from other departments and programs. The prospect of cross-listed courses from other parts of the college curriculum persuaded many that Communications could be a viable concentration with the current staff of two faculty. A future proposal for a second tenure-track position should account for this issue of interdisciplinarity. Second, the Committee respectfully observes that the department should evaluate its grade distributions. According to college records, between spring 2004 and fall 2005, communications faculty in full-credit courses gave more A's than any other grade. The mean grade point average (GPA) in communications is at the high end of mean GPA's among college departments and programs. The Committee applauds Professor Phelan's commitment to rigor, and, indeed, the Committee considers the rigor of departments when it discusses faculty allocations. In this light, the Committee urges Professor Phelan to examine the bearing of grade distributions upon the rigor of the Communication Department.

Comparative Literature:

The Committee on Academic Policy recommends that the college approve the request from the Comparative Literature Department for the replacement of Carol Rupprecht by a full-time, tenure track position in Arabic / Middle Eastern Literature starting July 1, 2007. The committee was impressed by the description of the position, and has only a few suggestions. These recommendations include that the person hired has a second field of expertise (ie: China); has an interest in classical literature; and that the position may be specifically advertised as Islamic rather than solely "Middle Eastern". These are suggestions that arose during the CAP discussions that do not put into question the core description of the original request. In terms of the Comparative Literature Department as a whole, the Committee recommends that more open enrollment classes be offered on a regular basis.

Computer Science:

The members of the Committee on Academic Policy have unanimously recommended to the Dean of the Faculty that the position now occupied by Brian Rosmaita in the Department of Computer Science be reallocated. Since the position was allocated to Computer Science principally due to enrollment pressures, and those pressures have evaporated, it is our judgment the position can best be used elsewhere. While Computer Science, like any program or department in the College, could use another person, it appears to us that our four tenured colleagues in Computer Science can cover the requirements of their concentration, and can continue to offer introductory courses to the wider community. We greatly appreciate the contributions of our colleagues in Computer Science, but there are greater needs elsewhere in the curriculum.

We applaud the Department's current work on departmental planning and curricular reorganization. We urge them to continue that process and to call upon the Dean for any assistance that they need. We cannot predict what those discussions might lead the Department to change in their curriculum or what resources might be necessary. At this stage, it is best that the Department focus on their own professional and instructional concerns before they request new personnel. It was not clear to us that hiring a replacement would have moved their curriculum into a new area, provided opportunities for more interdisciplinary cooperation, or enlarged the Department's attractions to students.

We did discuss their argument that this position should be theirs by virtue of our proposed new guideline that indicated possibly that Departments and Programs should not lose positions because an incumbent were refused tenure. First of all, we put those guidelines into the community for discussion purposes; nothing has been decided. Secondly, your questions have provoked a serious discussion of that issue, and doubtless our final guidelines will be substantially different. Lastly, were we to abide by that guideline, the Computer Science position still would not qualify. Professor Rosmaita went through the normal processes of hiring and reappointment; the Department could have raised questions then, and certainly would not have assumed that the position would always be theirs. Since Professor Rosmaita decided to resign, the position in any case goes back into the allocation process. The Committee appreciates the Department's assistance in refining the guidelines.

Dance:

The Dance Department has requested that Professor Walczyk's teaching load be increased from 4/5 to full-time. The department argues that this would enable them to satisfy more of the student demand for martial arts classes, and enable them to offer three concentration tracks within the program.

The Committee was sympathetic to the request, but in the end, decided not to support it. The CAP recognizes that these courses are popular, and that creating a "Martial Arts" track in the Dance Department would make the program distinctive. The Committee also commends the department for the time and effort they put into Departmental Planning

over the past year, and recognizes that increasing the faculty resources in the program would enable the program to reach some of the goals outlined in their departmental plan. Unfortunately, when weighed against other institutional needs, the Committee feels that the needs within the Dance program are not currently of the highest priority, and recommends against allocating additional resources to the program at this time.

On a more philosophical level, the Committee is concerned about the complexities and inequities that develop as the result of “fractional” appointments, and strongly recommends that the administration carefully review and examine the role of such positions.

East Asian Languages:

The East Asian Languages Department requested two new tenure-track positions, and the conversion of an existing instructor position to a full-time, tenure track line. After carefully considering this request, the Committee on Academic Policy recommends that the department be reallocated the four-year term position, and be granted one additional full-time, tenure track position starting July 2007. While the term position can remain focused primarily on language and culture, the CAP recommends that the tenure track position include upper level, literature courses. As part of this approval, which is a reallocation of a position from another department, the CAP also recommends that the department maintain stability in the Beijing program by having Hamilton faculty participate in the directorship of the program and by closely supervising the functioning of the program.

Economics:

The Economics Department requests a conversion of the 4-year term position occupied by Tolga Koker into a full-time, tenure-track position, or failing that, a renewal of the 4-year term position. The department bases this request upon its exceptionally large enrollments and the pressures that these enrollments create for the economics faculty. The Committee does not support the first part of the request, in view of other pressing needs across the college curriculum at this time. However, the Committee is pleased to recommend the renewal of the 4-year term position as a means to help the economics faculty meet student demand. The Committee acknowledges that the Economics Department has the second highest enrollments in the college (behind only Government) and, remarkably, it has the lowest mean grade point average among all departments and programs. This is an impressive combination.

French (and Italian):

The French Department requests the addition of a full-time, tenure track position citing over-enrollment in key courses, unsatisfactory pedagogical sequencing of the department’s courses, and the inability to contribute fully to general education programs. The department makes a good argument for the need to offer additional sections of lower level language courses (e.g. 111 and 130), although the need for a full-time (5 course) position was less compelling. Because of this, and because of the on-going problem of

maintaining the Italian program at Hamilton College, the Committee reconsidered last year's joint proposal from the French Department and the Critical Languages Program to share a term position.

While last year's CAP was "skeptical about the likelihood of finding a candidate able to handle both languages at the level of excellence expected by both programs", this year's committee thinks that the idea has merit, and that the two programs should be given the opportunity to at least try this experiment.

As it has for the previous two years, the CAP supports returning a previously lost term position to the French Department, with the stipulation that the position also is used to maintain the College's program in Italian Language instruction. It is the hope of the Committee that this term position would: 1) reduce enrollment pressures and stabilize curricular offerings in French; 2) maintain and stabilize instruction in Italian; and 3) provide programmatic and institutional flexibility for dealing with future curricular changes.

The Committee appreciates the French Department's willingness to explore creative ways to accommodate broad institutional needs in language instruction.

Government:

The Government Department requests the conversion of their current term position in Political Theory/ Environmental Politics to a full-time, tenure track line. The department justifies this request on the basis of: overall enrollments, number of majors, and need to stabilize the nascent Environmental Studies concentration.

The CAP fully recognizes the enrollment pressures within the Government Department, and agrees that the Environmental Studies program would benefit from the stability provided by a tenure-track faculty position in the social sciences. That said, the majority of the committee felt that it would be wise to wait another year to see what effects the new curricular changes in the Government Department have upon enrollment patterns and pressures, as well as providing another year to assess student interest in the new Environmental Studies concentration. Finally, the question of whether or not an additional tenure-track position will actually help alleviate enrollment pressures was a matter of debate among committee members. It was noted that the Government Department had 10 FTE's in 1996, while it currently has 12.5 FTE's, yet over this time, enrollments and numbers of majors per FTE did not decrease significantly, leading some to conclude that additional FTE's will not significantly alleviate enrollment pressures. The question of what the "right-size" is for a Government program at Hamilton College then becomes the fundamental question that the department, CAP, and administration need to address.

The CAP discussion of this request was lengthy, and it was not able fully to reach consensus. While the majority of the CAP does not support converting the term position to a tenure-track line at this time, the Committee does recognize the importance of maintaining an Environmental Politics position in the Government Department. For this reason, the Committee reiterates its recommendation from last year that "the Department

and the Dean take all prudent steps to insure that this position continues beyond 2008 and continues to incorporate environmental public policy in its definition”.

Hispanic Studies:

The Committee was impressed by the range of activities undertaken by the Hispanic Studies Department. We regret that it is unlikely that resources are currently available for reallocation to the department, however. Until such resources become available, we recommend that the department continue to consider internal reallocation of resources. For instance, it may be able to consolidate sections of 100-level courses with low enrollments, or intermit some offerings at the 100-level. It might also be possible for the department to reallocate resources internally by intermitting years during which a Hamilton faculty member is in residence in Madrid.

History

The History Department requests a conversion of the 4-year term position in pre-modern European history into a full-time, tenure-track position. The department makes this request on several grounds: First, pre-modern European history is essential to a respectable historical curriculum; second, the Hamilton History Department is alone among its peer institutions in lacking a full-time position in this field; third, this position plays a crucial role in enabling students to complete the history concentration; fourth, student enrollments demonstrate substantial interest in this field; and, finally, this position is vital to the survival of the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Program. The Committee does not support this request, though it acknowledges the long-term importance of retaining a pre-modern European historian at the college. The Committee does not support this request in view of other pressing needs across the college curriculum at this time, and in view of the fact that the Dean of the Faculty has renewed the relevant 4-year term position, into which the History Department recently hired Christopher Hill. The History Department has stated for several years now that it would support converting the position that Esther Kanipe now occupies into a tenure-track position for pre-modern European history upon Professor Kanipe's retirement. Professor Kanipe will probably retire in 2009, and the Committee believes that it should seriously reconsider the History Department's proposal at a point closer to that sad day.

Mathematics:

The Mathematics Department requested a 9th tenure-track FTE on the basis of increased enrollment pressures and on a departmental (and institutional) curricular need for a statistician. The department made a very strong and compelling argument for the additional position: the average number of majors has nearly doubled over the past decade, total enrollments at all levels have increased nearly 20%, and there is a real and demonstrated departmental and institutional need for a statistician.

The CAP also recognizes and commends the department for being successful at many levels. They have succeeded in creating an academic home for their students, and for

intellectually engaging their students at all levels. They also have created a collegial environment where all members of the faculty are committed to working together to improve the program. Finally, the department takes programmatic planning and assessment seriously, and has developed a departmental mission statement that is consistent with the liberal arts philosophy.

For these reasons, and others, the CAP strongly supports the department's request and recommends allocating a new, full-time, tenure track position to the department.

Physics:

The Physics Department requested an additional (6th) tenure-track position on the grounds that the current department is too small to offer the full complement of courses expected of "first-rate" physics departments. The department presented a strong curricular argument, and a well-thought out, 5-year curricular plan. However, because the Research Corporation grant was successful, the department will be able to search for the 6th FTE next year, and their allocation request became essentially moot.

While Physics and Chemistry will both be able to expand as a result of the Research Corporation Grant, the CAP is still concerned about how these positions will be supported after the four-year duration of the grant. As stated in last year's CAP allocation recommendations:

"..the Committee still believes any reallocation of positions from other departments or programs can be made only under the most serious of circumstances, with the most scrupulous examination of the specific situations, and within the context of a comprehensive strategy for allocation of Faculty positions. At this point no determination has been made about the priority status of new positions for Physics or for Chemistry"

Over the next four years, the CAP needs to carefully monitor and assess the success and institutional contributions of these two programs. If it can be clearly demonstrated that these departments truly need these additional resources, then the CAP needs to consider where these faculty resources may come from and plan accordingly. Conversely, if the additional faculty resources do not dramatically improve the quality of either program, then the CAP, the administration, and the departments need to work together to develop a plan for having each department eventually absorb these positions internally.

Summary of Spring 2006 allocation recommendations:

- Africana Studies: The CAP is, at this time, unable to support the program's request for an additional full-time, tenure-track position for a "target of opportunity" hire.
- Anthropology: The CAP recommends against returning the open tenure-track position to the department; the position should be reallocated to a program with greater demonstrated need.
- Chemistry: The CAP supports the department's request to retain the tenure-track position that will be available upon Professor Kinnel's retirement.
- Communication: The CAP is currently unable to support the program's request for an additional full-time, tenure-track position.
- Comparative Literature: The CAP supports the department's request to retain the tenure-track position that will be available upon Professor Rupprecht's retirement.
- Computer Science: The CAP recommends against returning the open tenure-track position to the department; the position should be reallocated to a program with greater demonstrated need.
- Dance: The CAP recommends against expanding the Walczyk position from 80% to full-time.
- East Asian Languages: The committee recommends adding one, full-time, tenure-track position to the Chinese languages program; it does not support the request for a second tenure-track position, or for the conversion of an existing term position to a tenure-track position.
- Economics: The CAP is, at this time, unable to support the request to convert an existing term position into a tenure-track position.
- French: The committee recommends that the French Department be allocated a new term position, and that the position also be used to maintain the College's offerings in Italian.
- Government: The CAP is currently unable to support the department's request to convert an existing term position into a tenure-track position.
- Hispanic Studies: The CAP is, at this time, unable to support the department's request to convert an existing term position into a tenure-track position, or to add a full-time tenure-track position to the department.
- History: The CAP is currently unable to support the department's request to convert an existing term position into a tenure-track position.
- Mathematics: The CAP supports the department's request for an additional tenure-track, full-time position.
- Physics: In light of the recent Research Corporation Grant, the CAP does not support the addition of another tenure-track, full-time position to the Physics department at this time.