

FACULTY MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 18, 2018

I. Report of the Secretary

Having received no corrections, the minutes from the May 9 and May 25 meetings were accepted.

II. Report from College Officers

A. President Greene

President Greene announced that the meeting would be adjourning early in observance of the Jewish holidays.

Since the topic of “test-optional” admissions is a bit time sensitive, I'd like to move that discussion to the beginning of the meeting.

I'll give you my quick report first. Welcome back to this semester, we're grateful for all of your work. This is the first year that new (tenure-track) faculty will be at a 4.5 course teaching load. We now have 208 faculty members - the largest number in our history. Our new faculty members will receive an increase in startup funding. We are constantly asking how we can support you in your work in the classroom, and in your research:

- We are offering increased support in faculty development and academic technology funds.
- We are ensuring that faculty salaries are competitive with our peer institutions. For the first time, we are in the top 5% for of salaries in all three levels of professorship.
- In terms of benefits, the lack of the dental plan has been a stubborn point of concern. We've not raised health costs in years but even still, folks in the benefits office have been negotiating to find a workable solution. I'm happy to announce that as of January 1, 2019, we have a dental plan!! More information on the plan will be out shortly.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

We've been thinking about the cost/benefit of test optional admissions for some time. I want to thank the good work of the faculty members and board members for their help in this process. This has been discussed in many venues, such as the Chairs and Directors meetings etc. Many of you may know that submission of SAT or ACT tests is currently optional at Bates and Bowdoin. We've done some new research and a number of things have changed over recent years which has led me to believe it may be time to consider this approach.

- We have an exceptionally broad and deep applicant pool. We're not trying to further increase the size of pool but we seek to enroll the students we most want.
- We asked the question, *who are we leaving out right now?*
 - There is a growing homogeneity of talent in our class.
 - Those less prepared for Colby are largely gone. (with a 1 out of 10 rate of acceptance, everyone is prepared).
 - Our process privileges upper-scoring kids (1400+).

- Schools prepare kids for this emphasis – there is a homogeneity of preparation. Students are counseled towards taking the same group of classes and they experience the same modes of thinking. But there are kids with other skills that we don't have among our students.
- Standardized test scores help to predict first year GPA, but they don't predict, for example, one's creativity, resilience, or ability to interpret.
- Places like Colby report an increasing rise in anxiety – especially about standardized testing. Playing a role in reducing anxiety would be good.
- Accommodations are on the rise, soon to aid 25% of the students taking tests. Families with resources can get their students diagnosed so that they receive this accommodation. My kids attended the Waterville schools where there is one SAT time, and little conversation about accommodation. Then my son moved to the Kent's Hill School where there are all sorts of discussions about accommodations.
- We also know that each additional time a student takes the SAT, their score is likely to rise nearly 90 points. Knowing of this advantage, some students start their preparation in 8th grade. All of this is driven by the resources of the family and the school system within which a student learns.
- There are so many incredibly talented students we're not getting. Students who are "spikey" – innovative students who are much less well-rounded, whose talents don't show up on standardized tests. Spikey kids less often consider Colby because they don't believe they'll get in.
- Our test-optional peers report that roughly 20 to 25% of students will not submit tests. The rest still do.
- Implementing optional test submission could be easily accommodated by admissions.
- Reality: SATs help to predict first-year success. It predicts about 40% of the variance in first-year GPA. The other 60% of variance we can't predict (too many variables: classes taken, student motivation etc.). Without the use of SATs, we can predict 30% of the GPA variance - not a huge drop, considering the benefits to diversifying the intellectual climate on campus.
- The time has come to do this.

NOTE: Vice President Andrew McGadney excused himself from the portion of the meeting concerning the test-optional admissions initiative.

Discussion of Test Optional Admissions – led by Matt Proto and Randy Arsenal

We heard in the 2014 Faculty Retreat that you wanted students who would take intellectual risks, students who were more "angular" in their interests, who were deeply engaged. Since then we have seen large increases in our student diversity: first generation, from regions outside of New England, students of color, students with varying needs for financial aid.

The studies on SAT scores correlate high scores with wealth, as students are able to take the test more than once, improving their scores each time by 90 points. This requires wealth. In

addition, access to test accommodations creates further inequity. These data are persuasive: SATs cannot be considered *standardized*.

We looked at predicting first year students' GPAs with or without SATs at Colby.

- Data show that the students most likely not to submit scores are Pell Grant recipients, first-generation college attenders, and female students.

Questions – moderated by Martha Arterberry

Dan LaFave (ECON) – It would be helpful to hear how applicants would be evaluated.

Matt - It wouldn't change the process, but allows us to consider and credit a student for how proactive they might be in their given context. With a process that includes the SAT, we have to use the score as the determinative factor.

Randy – Every student has two readers: an "academic" and "personal" reader. The academic reader knows the school context very well.

Ghada Gherwash (Writing Program) – Does this include the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)?

Matt – We do still require the TOEFL.

Joe Riesert (GOV) – Can we approach this as an experiment and check results in a few years?

Matt – Yes. we are excited to conduct significant research on this. There are several potential studies we could do. However, it's hard to go back once you have made the change. It's interesting though, at Trinity, their non-submitters are outperforming their submitters at this point.

Tim Hubbard (ECON) – In the wake of grade inflation in high schools, it may be hard to make comparisons across schools. Are there other matrices that would replace SAT scores in implementation?

Matt- Letters of recommendation are hugely helpful. "*Best student in 30 years*" and the like, get our attention. We respond to hearing that students are taking hard courses for the love of it.

Sandy Maisel (GOV) – This is very impressive. If we go test optional, our SAT score average should go up. How does this affect our non-submit rate?

Matt – Bowdoin and Wesleyan have had a consistent rate of non-submitters – consistently around 25 to 30%.

John Turner (HIS) – How quickly can we do this?

Matt – we'd like to move rather rapidly to implement this. The sooner we move, the sooner students can take advantage of this.

Greene – We recently had a group of 80 counselors on campus – they were all asking *why aren't you going test optional?* We'd like to roll this out next week.

B. Provost Margaret McFadden – Introduction of new faculty
(The list of new faculty who were introduced is appended at the end of the minutes)

The introduction of these new colleagues was followed by a sustained welcome of applause.

III. New Business – none

IV. Committee Reports

Task Force On Free Expression – Joe Riesert

- We convened in November with the charge of coming up with a statement of values that would then support policy recommendations.
- We've drafted the statement of values after meeting with the variety of constituencies on campus.
- We ask that faculty give us your feedback. We'll be meeting with the academic divisions to receive your thoughts. You can also email me or Cheryl Gilkes with your thoughts.
- Our goal is to produce a statement that receives broad support. We plan to go to the SGA by mid December.

V. Announcements – moderated by David Findlay

- Karlene Burrell-McRae: We encourage you to come to the open house downtown at the new residence hall on September 24. See the possibility of teaching. Asking students to think of the space differently. Inviting faculty and staff.
- Adrian Blevins: Two Cent talks on October 4—in Chace Community Forum—nice reception from Meridians. Kate Christiansen, Julia Bousamma, 5:30-7pm
- Dan Cohen: Noontime Forum schedule. Some openings in the spring.
- Kerill O'Neill: *The Presence of the Past*—humanities theme
 - Humanities conference at the end of the month (Sept 29)
 - New England Humanities Consortium—received a \$100,000 seed grant from Mellon
- Gary Green: Save the date: lecture October 11. Luke Sante—cultural historian and writer.
- Stacey Sheriff: Flyers with the dates for the 4 Writing Pedagogy lunches—discipline-specific writing, reading, etc.
- Paula Harrington: We do pizza lunches for students on targeted topics about writing. Also one for DavisConnects. Really useful for post-W1 pre-Capstone

Martha Arterberry moved to adjourn.

Adjourned: 5:08pm

Respectfully submitted,
Bevin Engman
Faculty Secretary

NEW FACULTY MEMBERS 2018-19

NAME & TITLE	
Eric G. Aaron, Ph.D. (Cornell)	Computer Science
Daniel Abrahams, Ph.D. (Johns Hopkins, South Carolina)	Environmental Policy
Tsiambwom Akuchu, MFA (Montana)	Theater and Dance
Ole Amundsen, M.S. (MIT)	Environmental Studies
Vanessa Anspaugh, MFA (Smith College)	Theater And Dance
Sandra Bernal Heredia, Ph.D. (Texas, Austin)	Spanish
Costel-Gabriel Bontea, Ph.D. (Bucharest, New Hampshire, Durham)	Mathematics and Statistics
David Casalspi, Ph.D. (Michigan State)	Education
Sarah E. Emanuel, Ph.D. (Wake Forest, Drew University)	Religious Studies
Yang I. Fan, Ph.D. (Washington, Seattle)	Economcis
Laura S. Fugikawa, Ph.D. (Southern California)	American Studies
Erin A. Giffin, Ph.D. (California, San Diego)	Economics
Lareese M. Hall, MLIS (Pittsburgh)	The Colby Libraries
Ryan P. Harper, Ph.D. (Princeton)	Religious Studies
Katherine Hollander, Ph.D. (Boston)	Faculty Fellow in History
Lijing Jiang, Ph.D. (Arizona State)	Science, Technology, and Society
Ariel G. Keller, Ph.D (Emory)	Mathematics
Oliver W. Layton, Ph.D. (Boston)	Computer Science
Jie Liu, Ph.D. (Kansas, Michigan State)	East Asian Studies
Lindsey R. Madison, Ph.D. (Northwestern)	Chemistry
Alexandrine Mailhé, Ph.D. (California, Davis)	French
Carmen Manektala-Braun, Ph.D. (California, Riverside)	German
Anaïs M. Maurer, Ph.D. (Paris-Sorbonne, Tulang, Columbia)	French
Dámaris Mayans, Ph.D. (Florida, Gainesville)	Spanish
Carolyn Megan, MFA (Vermont College)	Writing

NAME & TITLE	
George W. Melvin, Ph.D. (Cambridge, Trinity, California, Berkeley)	Mathematics
Jennifer M. Meredith, Ph.D. (Washington)	Economics
Jesse D. Meredith, Ph.D. (City College of New York, Washington)	History
Lucas Penney	Environmental Studies
Jennifer A. Reed, Ph.D. (Edinburgh, Virginia)	English
David L. Reifschneider, Ph.D. (Wisconsin, Madison)	Economics
Ross E. Rogers, Ph.D. (Shippensburg University, Ohio)	Psychology
Zachary M. Shipstead, Ph.D. (Montana State, Georgia Institute of Technology)	Psychology
Viktor Shmagin, Ph.D. (California, Santa Barbara)	East Asian Studies
Juliet S. Sperling, Ph.D. (University of Pennsylvania)	Art
Adrian Switzer, Ph.D. (Loyola)	Philosophy
Christopher S. Welser, Ph.D. (Maryland, College Park, Brown)	Classics
Arisa A. White, MFA (Massachusetts, Amherst)	English (Creative Writing)
Jerzy A. Wiczorek, Ph.D. (Portland State, Oregon, Carnegie Mellon)	Statistics
Junji Yoshida, Ph.D. (Oregon)	Japanese
Lauren Y. Yoshizawa, M.A. (Stanford, Harvard)	Education