

CAP Allocation Recommendations to the DOF (May 2013)

Biology

The Biology Department requests a reallocation of one tenure-track position due to the retirement of Ernest Williams. The retirement of Williams will leave a gap in one of the department's emphases, ecology and evolutionary biology. The department requested a tenure-track assistant professor of population ecology to teach a lecture/lab course, an additional course on conservation or global change biology, to contribute to a team-taught introductory program, and participate in advising senior theses. This request was well supported with data from peer institutions and documentation of curricular contributions. Having found the curricular argument for the position sound, the CAP supports Biology's request. The CAP expects that the person hired will continue Ernest's contribution to the Environmental Studies program.

Comparative Literature/English

The Departments of Comparative Literature and English and Creative Writing have collaborated on a request for a term position to be shared across the departments. The person hired would be housed in both departments and would help replace resources lost from both departments in recent years (Comparative Literature lost a tenure track position in 2008 and English and Creative Writing lost one in 2007). This joint request is in response to advice offered from past CAP recommendations and the DOF to collaborate on their shared interests. In line with this, the proposed position would result in courses that would be cross-listed in both departments and contribute to both majors. The departments seek to hire a person in transnational literary studies to focus on interactions among multiple cultures and on literary theory. The CAP feels this is a very strong request that proposes expansion into areas reflecting promising future directions for the field of literary studies. Unfortunately, due to other pressing demands to support current ongoing programs in the curriculum, CAP is unable to recommend supporting the position at this time.

The CAP feels this proposal is worthy of support. We recommend supporting this request to strengthen both departments when resources become available and encourage the departments to resubmit the request in future years.

Critical Languages (Italian)

The Critical Languages Program requests a term position for Italian to increase the total to 2 term positions. A term position would offer stability in an area that has shown consistent and growing student demand for well over 10 years. Annual enrollments in Italian have shifted from 50-70 students per year in 2003-2006 to 80-120 students per year in 2007-2013. These numbers place Italian as the third most popular language on campus, behind Chinese and Hispanic Studies. This reflects national trends according to MLA reports. Students take Italian to supplement their studies in other departments (e.g., Music, Comparative Literature, Art History). Thus, interest in Italian is strong and longstanding. Currently, the program supports these numbers of students with a single FTE, and frequently must turn away students who are interested in learning the language. Courses are often over-enrolled, and the current faculty member (Mary Sisler) teaches an overload with 6 courses each year. The single Italian instructor also organizes numerous out of class activities to promote language learning (e.g., language tables, movie nights). The addition of a term position would alleviate the current pressure experienced in the program and permit the addition of at least one advanced course for students returning from their study abroad experiences. The CAP feels it is unacceptable for the current faculty member to continue teaching an overload, and therefore recommends supporting this request.

East Asian Languages and Literature

The East Asian Languages and Literatures Department requests two new positions:

- 1) A tenure-track position in Chinese pedagogy and contemporary Chinese language and culture.
- 2) A term position in Chinese language and culture.

The CAP recognizes the outstanding international reputation of the “Hamilton model” of Chinese language instruction. Although we understand that language instruction is time-intensive, particularly for level IV languages, the staffing for Chinese language instruction is at sufficient levels at this time relative to other language programs. Because of pressing needs in other areas of the curriculum, the CAP is unable to support these requests this year.

English & Creative Writing

The English and Creative Writing Department requests reallocation of a tenure-track line to replace Catherine Kodat who resigned in May 2012. The request is for a position in 20th-Century American Literature with expertise in narrative fiction and new literary media. A position in 20th-Century American literature is considered a central component of English departments across the country. In addition, the position serves the College’s broader curriculum in educating students in their own literary tradition. The CAP expects that this hire will continue to support the American Studies program. Retaining the position in English will allow the department to continue its strong tradition of serving the college-wide curriculum and writing program. The request was well supported with data from peer institutions and documentation of curricular contribution. The CAP recommends reallocating the tenure-track line in 20th-Century American Literature.

Environmental Studies

The Environmental Studies Program has requested a term position to be housed in Geosciences to teach ES 221 and other courses on global climate change and the Adirondacks. They are re-applying in light of last year’s CAP decision. They argue that enrollments are high, growing from 87 to 167.5 in the years 2009-2012. They also point out that they expect the “increasing salience of environmental problems” (2) to lead to continued increasing course enrollments. Their main argument is one for curricular stability. Given the voluntary nature of faculty participation in the program, they cannot reliably staff core courses. They are also facing the retirements of Robin Kinnel and Ernest Williams, and the resignation of Gene Domack.

The CAP recognizes the importance of Environmental Studies and the difficulties posed by these changes. Nonetheless, the concentration was originally approved with assurances that it would not require additional faculty. Therefore, the CAP recommends a non-renewable 2-year term position while the program committee reassesses the long-term prospects for stability.

Government

With the retirement of David Paris, effective at the end of 2012, and the resignation of Carol Drogus in 2005, the Department requests the allocation of a tenure-track position in Latin American politics. Last year Government and the DOF agreed that the term position in Latin American politics that was granted should be a one-year appointment in anticipation of the department’s applying this year for a tenure-track line in Latin American politics.

The proposal cites the increasing popularity of the World Politics concentration, with many students eager to specialize in Latin American politics. A tenure-track person in this field would also significantly contribute to the long-term strength and stability of the Latin American Studies program;

supporting letters from three members of the Latin American Studies program attest to the critical nature of a position in politics to sustain the minor. The CAP recommends the allocation of this tenure-track position to replace the one-year term position.

Hispanic Studies

The Hispanic Studies Department requests the renewal of a term position that they have held for over a decade and that has become a critical component of their curriculum. The position is essential in supporting the curriculum, advising senior theses, and coordinating the teaching assistants. The suggested specialties, either in US Latino Studies or in linguistics, will allow the department to offer classes much in demand. The request was well supported with data from peer institutions and documentation of curricular contribution. The CAP recommends renewing the term position in Hispanic Studies.

History

The History Department requests two tenure-track positions: one reallocation in African-American history (due to resignation of Chad Williams) and an additional tenure-track position in Middle Eastern/Islamic World history. The History Department already has 9 FTEs; their argument is not based on numerical pressure (they point out that they teach many writing-intensive courses which depresses their overall numbers but their courses are well-enrolled) but on the curricular needs for coverage of the emerging field of the Middle East while maintaining the position in African American history. Several supporting letters were provided for the positions.

The CAP will not recommend both positions.

- 1) The CAP recognizes the importance of Middle Eastern/Islamic World history; however, because of pressing needs in other areas of the curriculum, the CAP is unable to support this request this year.
- 2) The CAP is committed to retaining the African-American history position. However, the committee is concerned with the lack of “curricular coordination with other departments with similar curricular needs and interests” mentioned as a criterion in the Allocation Guidelines. Therefore, in accordance with the Allocation Guidelines, the CAP recommends a one-year replacement in African-American history while holding the tenure-track position open for the department to redevelop its proposal.

Philosophy

The Philosophy department requests a tenure-track position to replace Bob Simon who is retiring by June, 2015. The CAP was persuaded that a position in ethics and social and political philosophy is central to the discipline and to the course offerings of the department, and therefore supports this request. The department supports a wide array of programs across the curriculum. The CAP is confident that the position will contribute to the continuing success of the department and to the overall curriculum of the college.

Physics

The Physics Department requests a reallocation of the tenure-track position vacated by the resignation of Natalia Connolly. The department states, “Losing the position would seriously impact our instruction in each of these areas [physics, and other science and pre-health students] and leave us unable to respond to currently increasing enrollments.” As is typical in physics departments at liberal arts colleges, a person hired in this position would be expected to teach almost all course offerings including

those designed for non-science majors. The request was well supported with data from peer institutions and documentation of curricular contribution. The CAP supports the Physics Department's request.

Psychology

The Psychology department requests the reallocation of two tenure-track positions, one in neuroscience to replace Jeremy Skipper who is resigning June 2013 and one in developmental psychology to replace Jean Burr who resigned June 2012. The neuroscience position would maintain the number of Psychology faculty contributing to the Neuroscience Program at three, a number that the department argued for successfully in their request last year for redefining the line that will be vacated by Jon Vaughan in 2016. The department made a strong argument that three FTEs in neuroscience are necessary to staff the required courses and supervise senior projects. The developmental position is equally necessary as developmental psychology is one of the four essential content areas for an undergraduate degree in psychology and there is no other development psychologist in the department. The request was well supported with data from peer institutions and documentation of curricular contribution. The CAP recommends reallocating the two tenure-track lines in Psychology.

Theatre

The Department requests the allocation of a tenure-track position in Design. Currently, Design courses are covered by one person in a term position, whose term expires in 06/2014, and by the Technical Director/Resident Lighting Designer (an administrative position). The department has recently restructured its introductory offerings to emphasize the broad scope of Theatre, including history, criticism and production, as well as performance. Scenic design, scene painting and costume design courses have seen steady increases in enrollment, from 14 in AY 2008-09 to 47 in AY 2012-13. Moreover, they provide both majors and non-majors the opportunity to combine aesthetic, creative, analytic and technological skills. In particular, three design courses (Theatre 105, 212 and 213) contribute to the college's Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning program. There is also the promise of fruitful collaboration with the Digital Humanities Initiative.

The rationale provided by the department for the conversion from a term position to a tenure-track position is the upcoming opening of the new Theatre and Studio Arts building. A long-term position in design would provide continuity and stability in transitioning to the new facility. Additionally, the new facility is expected to (is in fact intended to) draw more students to the arts; other institutions erecting new facilities have seen dramatic increases in numbers of concentrators. The Theatre Department argues that a tenure-track line in Design will allow for long-term planning to accommodate this anticipated demand.

The CAP agrees that Design is an essential component of the discipline and that demand for courses in this area are unlikely to decrease. However, the CAP is reluctant to allocate tenure-track lines in anticipation of future increased enrollments, as opposed to an ongoing record of increased enrollments. The CAP recommends the renewal of the term position in Design, but encourages the department to apply for conversion of this position to a tenure-track line in the future as numbers warrant.