

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 23, 2015
To: Members of the Hampshire College community
From: Gaye Hill, Chair of the Board of Trustees
Re: November 2015 Board meeting

The November meeting of Hampshire's Board of Trustees was very productive, and I am pleased to write and share the highlights with you.

Even before the meeting began, the trustees were privileged to participate in two important educational experiences. First, several trustees met with members of the student group, Decolonize Media Collective, to discuss Hampshire's policy on environmental, social, and governance investing. The students have been advocating for changing the policy to explicitly identify private prisons as an industry in which Hampshire will not invest, and I am pleased to report that one of the Board's first actions was to vote unanimously in support of this change. The trustees also attended presentations by students involved in the Ethics and the Common Good program, which were stellar. Students are why the College exists; both experiences reinforced for me why I am so proud to volunteer on Hampshire's behalf.

The focus of this Board meeting was the academic program. Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty Eva Rueschmann provided the trustees with a valuable portrait of Hampshire's faculty: demographic characteristics, rank, distribution across the academic schools, workload statistics, course sizes, dissemination of research and creative work, etc. The presentation enabled us to better understand how our faculty serves the College. Professor of History and NEASC Steering Committee Co-Chair Aaron Berman briefed the Board on preparations for Hampshire's reaccreditation process. Trustees also reviewed the status of Strategic Priority A in the College's Strategic Plan, about the academic program. Preparations for the fundraising campaign were a prominent theme of the Board meeting as well, with presentations about each of the following priority areas: supporting the Hampshire thriver; academic innovation, engagement, and leadership; the campus as a living laboratory; wellness at the heart of campus; differentiating and influencing higher education; and "non satis scire" every day (i.e., the Hampshire Fund).

In addition to the vote on amending the investment policy, the Board took the following actions:

~ Elected Jose Fuentes 05F and Pasha Dritt Thornton 85F as new trustees, each for a 4-year term beginning February 1, 2016.

~ Approved the pending bond refinance and authorized President Jonathan Lash and Vice President for Finance and Administration Mary McEneaney to negotiate the final terms of the loan. I will add that this was a herculean effort, and the trustees are all very grateful to Vice President McEneaney for advocating so successfully on Hampshire's behalf!

~ Approved pending faculty personnel actions as recommended by President Lash.

~ Authorized a 2.5% rate increase in tuition, room, and board for FY 2017.

~ Approved amended policies for the naming of facilities, as well as memorial and honorary trees and benches.

~ Last but not least, the Board discussed President Lash's performance review. The President's five-year contract will end in July 2016, and before considering a renewal it was essential for the Board to hear comprehensive community feedback on his performance. A subcommittee of trustees interviewed many Hampshire constituents over the course of several months, among them the academic deans, the senior administrative team, direct reports, and office staff members. Additionally, we provided multiple time slots for anyone in the community who wished to meet with us and share their perspectives. Finally, the trustees all submitted individual written evaluations. I am pleased to report that the feedback we received about President Lash's leadership was uniformly enthusiastic and affirmative of the College's direction, and consequently the Board voted to renew his contract for another five years, effective July 1, 2016.

I hope you find this information helpful and, as always, I welcome your comments and ideas. Please feel free to contact me at trustees@hampshire.edu or Beth Ward, secretary of the College, at bward@hampshire.edu.

I wish you all peaceful and safe holidays, and I send you my heartfelt thanks for everything you do for Hampshire College.