

To: Newly Appointed Faculty and Faculty Returning  
from Leave

Re: College Governance Commission

From: Faculty Representatives to the CGC

Several accounts of various aspects of the College's commitment to re-examine the procedures by which, and the ends to which, it governs itself have been distributed since last spring. The five faculty elected to represent the faculty on the Commission expect that the Commission will meet for the first time next week; this seemed an appropriate time to review, for faculty who were not here last spring, the formal participation of the faculty (in faculty meeting and through its delegates to Academic Council) in the decisions which led to the Commission and its charge. Because we think others on campus might find this review helpful, we are sending this chronicle to all faculty and students. The faculty delegates do not intend, in this document, to evaluate events since last spring; nor do they claim to recount all needs and motives at work on campus. Rather we present a review of documents submitted to and produced by the faculty or administration which are relevant to the Commission.

In a memo (February 3, 1972) to the Faculty, the Committee on Student Standing and Programs, chaired then by Professor Patrick McCarthy, discussed the academic performance of black and Puerto Rican students:

" Reviewing this term's deficiencies the Committee on Student Standing and Programs (CSSP) was faced with the following problem: out of nineteen students interviewed because they were in danger of being dropped from the College nine were non-white and seven of the nine were black. These figures, far from being exceptional, are approximately in harmony with the total number of deficiencies reported and with the statistics of Spring semester.

The Committee discussed matters with a number of black students. Three themes emerged:

1. Their [black students] general unhappiness in the Haverford environment. This acts in specific ways to harm their work. For example, one student stated that in his three terms here he had had good contact with only one member of the administration and faculty. Almost all students said that they had trouble talking to their teachers.
2. For students with poor high school background the first months at Haverford are a difficult and often catastrophic experience. They fall behind at once in their courses (often for simple reasons - two students could not take notes well enough to keep up with the material). Writing is an acute problem, verbal skills another.
3. For the same kind of student the present advising system is almost useless. The students we talked to had no real contact with their advisers."

The Committee presented two alternatives to the Faculty:

1. A commitment of attitudes, time and money to meeting the needs of a diverse group of students.
2. Deny admission to all students "from poor high school backgrounds."

The CSSP memo was discussed on campus; several responses were made to it. On February 9, the Black Students League sent a statement to the Faculty and Administration explaining their "several concerns" with the general cultural situation at Haverford and criticizing a document (Educational Commitment Program) released by the Administration.

" Does the College want a body of students which reflects the diversity of the larger community?

Does the College recognize whether the cultures of minorities are to a substantial degree different from that of the majority at this institution?

If there are differences, how are these differences included in the decision-making processes of this institution?

If the College is interested in creating a diverse community given a fixed budget, what is the priority of that diversity across the total configuration of this institution? For example, what is the priority of receiving a Black input into the College counselling service?"

"The proposal [Educational Commitment Program] [by the Administration] is invalid for the simple reason that it is written from the oppressors point of view!"

In response to a request by the CSSP, following their memo of February 3, and with the statement of the BSL (February 9, 1972) in mind, the faculty was convened February 10, 1972, by the President of the College. The minutes of that meeting state:

The President noted that this special meeting was held in response to a request by the Committee on Student Standing and Programs, following the publication of that committee's letter to the faculty of 3 February (annex 1).

The President read to the faculty the document, "Several Concerns, or a Bill of Facts" presented by the Haverford College Black Students League on 9 February (annex 2).

During the ensuing discussion, consensus was reached on the following points:

1. The concerns expressed by the Black Students League in its statement of 9 February are of the greatest validity and priority.
2. The faculty agrees that the problems reflected by these concerns are not related in any way to ability, but rather to a serious gulf which exists between black and white on this campus.
3. The faculty -- as individuals, in its committees, and specifically in the Academic Council -- commits itself to close examination of these concerns with all parts of the community, especially the black students, in the immediate future.

Item 2 is the faculty's statement that "poor highschool backgrounds" is an insufficient explanation of the data brought forth in the CSSP memo of February 3. The faculty statement of consensus followed a discussion of additional data presented by CSSP and by Colin MacKay for EPC. On February 20, 1972, the BSL sent a statement to the faculty and administration discussing their views of the situation faced by students who do not conform to the Haverford paradigm (p.4). In evaluating

the response to the BSL's stated positions, the document of February 20 concluded: "If one follows the course of the last two weeks, one sees swiftly the need of institutionalization of diversity in every aspect of the operations and procedures of the College. From admissions to capital planning, the structure of the College must be such that the true interests of minority students are a constant factor in policy initiation, formulation, and implementation.

It is not unrealistic to expect that Haverford College make the following symbolic gestures of good intent by 5:00 (five o'clock) p.m., Friday, 25 February, 1972:

- 1) A presentation of the full college budget that embodies the commitment of institutionalizing the diversity mentioned above and a statement justifying the budget as it is presented.
- 2) A plan for reconstitution of College governance in totality with the end of becoming representative of the actual diversity of Haverford College" (10 addtl. items followed).

The Puerto Rican students at Haverford discussed their perception of their own situation at Haverford in a document (to students, faculty and administration) of February 22." Haverford must first recognize that Puerto Rican students, because they are members of an oppressed minority and of a different background, have particular needs. Ignoring the idiosyncracies of these students has de facto created an oppressive environment here.

Haverford must make an institutional commitment to educate minority group students as to their particular needs. It must provide the necessary skills and opportunities conducive to the individual development of the student and as to his usefulness vis a vis his oppressed community. These needs must be provided for in the curriculum, in the student services, in the faculty and other student resources. Haverford must guarantee that this commitment will be institutionalized in the decision-making fabric of the College, even at its highest levels."

Thomas D'Andrea, then serving as Acting Provost, had announced "To the Faculty and the entire College community", in a memo of February 21, 1972, that CSSP, EPC, Administrative Advisory Committee and Academic Council were "eager to begin discussion" of the "issues brought before the College by the BSL Meetings were scheduled for the week of the 21st. The BSL was asked by the committee chairman to send a delegation to the meetings; participation by all at the College was welcomed.

On Wednesday, February 23, President Coleman spoke to the College in Roberts Hall. He called his talk "Perspectives on the Black Students Concerns". Responding to Item 2 in the BSL list of "Symbolic gestures of good intent" (February 9, 1972), he said:

"The BSL statement of this week calls for a "plan for reconstitution of College governance with the end of becoming representative of the actual diversity of Haverford College." The recent draft report from the Study Group on College Governance was more than a year in the making. One proof that some of us have learned much this month is found in our feeling that parts of that report are already out of date even before they are acted upon. Had the report been implemented before February, its new institutions -- a College Council and a College Forum -- might have helped us somewhat in these days. They wouldn't however have built an acceptance of diversity into our institutions. And so they must be re-worked.

An aspect of our existing system is that it is impossible -- properly so -- for the President to commit the campus to another form of government. To be workable,

any changes must emerge from the considered agreement among all of us. This afternoon, I call upon the faculty, the Students Association, the Board of Managers and myself to decide anew who their delegates should be to that Study Group. I ask that reconstituted group to meet at once with leaders of the BSL and other minorities to be sure that there is adequate participation from them in the deliberations of that committee. And I urge the committee to come up with amended or new proposals at the earliest possible date so that a diversified campus community may have more effective ways to make sensible decisions. In the interests of speedy progress, I hope that the reconstituted committee may use the December report from the predecessor group as a taking-off point. If it proves useful, fine. If not, they will have to start all over again."

The following day, February 24, 1972, a special meeting of the faculty continued a discussion of the issues and heard reports from its committees investigations of the BSL concerns. President Coleman responded on the 25th to the 16 specific concerns of the documents (February 20 and 22) of the BSL and Puerto Rican students at Haverford.

A special faculty meeting, closed to all but the faculty of the College, was held on March 7, 1972, in response to the President's call on February 23 for a new Governance Commission. The faculty at the meeting agreed that: it wishes to see such a study group formed, charged with:

1. Seeking as broad assent as possible for decisions, so that all those affected by decisions can participate in the making of them.
2. Promoting diversity within the College.
3. Ensuring a concern for the future as well as for the present in College life.
4. Utilizing the time and expertness of those within the College community in effective ways.
5. Lodging responsibilities clearly, and building in checks so that those charged with responsibility can be called to account.

Although several faculty left the room at a later time, after Sarah Shumer read a statement explaining the reason for their withdrawal, the Faculty Meeting concluded "inclining" toward the following positions:

1. Its five elected representatives can immediately meet to discuss issues of governance, and can subsequently become part of the full study group when other constituencies have chosen their delegates.
2. No recommendations from the study group that change the existing powers of constituent groups can take effect until the constituent groups have themselves approved the changes. Each constituent group is the determinant of its own procedures for seeking agreement to the terms of the study group's report.
3. Nevertheless, no topic of governance should be ruled "out of bounds" for examination and discussion.
4. The study group should, in its initial deliberations, meet without delegates from the Board of Managers, although advice would always be sought from

representatives from the Board. In large measure, this position is the result of a feeling that off-campus membership of the study group probably could not find time to participate fully in the initial discussions which, it is hoped, will be intensively conducted during the weeks subsequent to spring vacation, and which seem likely to focus on on-campus issues.

At the regularly scheduled Faculty Meeting of March 9, Vernon Dixon, Robert Gavin, Harvey Glickman, Bruce Partridge, and Frederica Brind were elected faculty representatives to the Commission called for by the President and agreed to by the Faculty. Vernon Dixon informed the faculty in writing on March 13, 1972 that he believed he could best serve the College by declining a position on the Commission. Daniel Larkin, having placed second to R.W.Brind in the fifth election, was moved from alternate to faculty delegate to the commission.

The faculty delegates began meeting together shortly after the elections. In the absence of other delegates they determined to serve as a Faculty Study Group on Governance (FSGG), examining governance issues for the faculty. Bruce Partridge was asked to serve the Group as convenor. Invitations were sent to the BSL, Puerto Rican Students at Haverford, all Faculty and the Student Government to meet with the FSGG to discuss governance at Haverford. After a month of frequent meetings, the FSGG brought a report to a special faculty meeting of April 27, 1972, recommending the formation and charges of a College Governance Commission. Acceptance of the report by the Faculty would mean Faculty adoption of the FSGG statement as the formal faculty recommendation to the President on the formation of the Commission for which President Coleman had called. After considerable discussion the Faculty declined to accept the report and called for a new report on May 4, 1972. The report submitted May 4 was accepted with some revision by the Faculty meeting. In its approved form, it called for a Commission of five faculty, seven students and two administrators. In addition, the faculty approved the inclusion of: two administrators as full members of the Commission. We recommend that the President or Provost serve.

One or more members of the Board of Managers and one or more members of the Haverford College Staff Association--timing, number, and role to be worked out by the Commission in consultation with the Board and the Association."

Among the seven charges recommended to the Commission were the following:

To consider specifically and promptly issues and decisions which bear on diversity at Haverford. A priority task of the Commission will be to define diversity in the Haverford context and establish guidelines for its implementation. The Commission is not to act as an "interim government". It may choose to make policy recommendations on substantive as well as procedural matters during the time it meets.

All such recommendations shall be presented to the constituent groups, including their committees, for consideration and action.

To function temporarily as a collective ombudsman until the recommendations it makes under (C) have been acted on. (The functions of an ombudsman include hearing grievances, making them public, and bringing them to presently authorized bodies.)

At the regularly scheduled Faculty Meeting of May 11, 1972, the faculty decided that Frederica Brind, Harvey Glickman, Dan Larkin, and Bruce Partridge -- all from the present Faculty Study Group on Governance -- should be four representatives to the Commission on Governance. Using the voting procedure for a faculty representative

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to the Board, Louis Green was elected the fifth representative. Jim Ransom, the runner-up in the election, was declared an alternate for any of the other five.

This fall the faculty delegates met and urged President Coleman to call for formation of the full Commission and for an initial meeting at the earliest possible date. The President simultaneously announced the appointment of Gerhard Spiegler and Gregory Kannerstein as Administration representatives to the Commission. The President wrote to the Student Government urging speedy selection of student representatives; President Coleman has now called an initial meeting of the Commission for October 3, 1972, following the selection of student delegates.

The five faculty delegates will continue to report to and seek the counsel of all members of the Faculty as the Commission's work goes on.