

**Committee on Admission and Financial Aid
Minutes – May 5, 2008**

Present: Seth Allen, Sig Barber, Bob Grey, Nabila Mirza '11, Vida Praitis, Jim Swartz, Colin Thompson '09, Sarah White, Arnold Woods

Update on Admission & Aid

Allen distributed the numbers noting that the first Monday in May is typically a big day for deposits. Of particular note:

1. 2008 marks the largest number of applications received in the College's history
2. This also appears to be the lowest acceptance rate in history
3. The enrollment for Fall 2008 is higher than we would like
4. This is the highest number of U.S. students of color
5. Although the percentage of international students remains at 12-13%, it represents greater geographic diversity than previously with healthier numbers from Africa, Latin America and many fewer from Southeast Asia. This is a result of intentional engineering of the class.
6. Activity in the South is down...fewer applications, fewer admits and fewer deposits)
7. Quality as indicated by SAT and ACT scores is nearly identical to 2007

In response to the larger population of entering students rated 24 and lower, Allen reported that this population represents different kinds of students.

Concern regarding space issues and other dangers of over enrollment: if summer melt is similar to the previous year, we are likely to see 8-10% melt. With a 10% melt factored in, we could still receive 480 deposits and be within our target enrollment. As of this date we have probably 30 more deposits than we would like.

Student response to housing and tutorial sign-up is typically a good indicator of melt, which we will see later in the summer.

The other numbers that do not appear in the formula are attrition and off-campus study. There are currently 120 signed up for off-campus study for Fall 2008 but it is expected that this number will increase. Also of note is the implementation of the new aid policy, which occurred at the end of the application review process. Swartz noted that there are 1500 "class" spaces for first year students, other than the tutorial

Discussion on the Admission Board

What is the board's role? Is it a good use of faculty time? Does it contribute to the overall mission of the College?

Allen reported that the conversations were very helpful this year. On the first pass, 35 of 100 applications reviewed were admitted. After a second pass, 20 of those were taken out of the admit pool.

Time commitment is 8-10 hours per week for five weeks. Allen felt that a wider spectrum of applicants was reviewed this year than previously. Allen asked that committee members inform him if they have thoughts about the admission board. Grey suggested that board and committee members be brought together for more substantive discussion in the future.

Swartz also suggested there may be a disconnect between the faculty mandate and the admission office. In earlier years, there may have been a broader cross-section of files reviewed by faculty. He indicated that Grinnell was at a very different place when the policy was drafted and wondered if there needed to be another faculty meeting to discuss this.

If members have suggestions for agenda items next year, please let Seth know.

American Sign Language (ASL)

There is currently no policy that allows the admission office to count American Sign Language as foreign language study. Students are penalized in the application process if they are lacking foreign language units (transfer students are awarded credit, however). Sarah White distributed a proposal suggesting that ASL be accepted as a foreign language in the application review process. It was decided that Sig would present the proposal to the foreign language committee for consideration. If the committee denies the proposal, it will go back to the Committee on Admission and Financial Aid. If it is approved by the faculty committee, the policy will move forward without going back to CAFA.

Respectfully submitted,
C. Newport