Personal Statement

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1. Intellectual Vision for the College
2. Financial Sustainability
3. Equity
4. Inclusivity, Full Participation, and Academic Freedom
5. Supporting Faculty with Diverse Life and Career Experiences
6. Shared Governance
7. The Faculty Development Process
8. The Staffing Plan in a Time of Contraction
9. My Academic Interests
10. Staying Engaged in Faculty Work

1. Intellectual Vision for the College

A few years ago, Andrea Lanoux organized a group of students and faculty who read and discussed Svetlana Boym's book, *The Future of Nostalgia*. At the time, I was advising a philosophy honors thesis student, Norah Hannel who coincidentally was working on a project on the nature of nostalgia. So we both participated. The reading group was fun and intense, with three or four students and three or four faculty members at every meeting. This had a huge impact on Norah, who went on to present her work at several undergraduate philosophy conferences—including this one, where Jesse Prinz, a distinguished philosopher whose work she criticized in her thesis, was actually her commentator. If Norah seems confident in this video, that's partly because she had already been mixing it up in discussion with her professors in the reading group. The experience affected my teaching and research for the better, too. Boym's amazing chapter on dinosaurs and nostalgia had an impact on the design of my ConnCourse on "The Meaning of Dinosaurs." And it also helped me see new connections between environmental nostalgia and historical natural science (which I write a bit about here). Andy Lanoux may not even know what impact her reading group had, and I hope she doesn't mind this shout out.

When I ask myself, "Why do I like being at a liberal arts college, rather than, say, a research university?" I always come back to experiences like we had in the nostalgia group. This, for me, is what it's all about. I've spent sabbatical semesters at research universities (the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Calgary) and have had incredible intellectual experiences at both places. However, nothing quite like the nostalgia reading group would have been conceivable at either of those places. When I think about what's special about this kind of academic experience, the following features all seem salient:

- The excitement of working with undergraduates who are discovering the joys of research and creative work for the first time.
- Non-obvious forms of interdisciplinarity (in this case: Slavic studies and cultural studies meeting philosophy of science and philosophy of psychology)
- The blurring of boundaries between teaching and research
- Continuity between intellectual and creative work done in classes and intense intellectual experiences outside of class.

The nostalgia group is just one example from the humanities. Some of these things naturally happen in different ways in the arts and the natural sciences.

Full participation is central to this vision. It requires that one have faith in one's co-inquirers and co-creators, and a willingness to undertake joint inquiry and creative work with students and colleagues whose social positions, self-understandings, life experiences, and maybe even politics, might differ widely from one's own. It's all about learning from each other while trying to figure things out together. We must also use our intellectual tools to analyze, understand and address the various inequities, biases, social structures, practices, and histories that get in the way of collective geeking out. When we do this, we're using collective inquiry to target and address the most serious obstacles to collective inquiry.

As someone who is deeply invested in the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment, I share the view that our intellectual pursuits also have to involve ethical engagement with the wider world. Incoming sophomores in the GNCE all work on projects for the Avalonia Land Conservancy, a service learning component that gets our students off campus and engaged in real land conservation issues in southeastern Connecticut. When we're back in the seminar room reading and discussing technical philosophical papers on, say, ecosystem health or obligations to future generations, everyone in the group has some shared experience in the world that gives us a common reference point, and a clearer sense of what the stakes are. This bringing our academic work out into the world, and bringing the world back into our classrooms, is also something we do extremely well, not just in the GNCE and the other centers but in a variety of ways across the college, including the new curricular pathways.

2. Financial Sustainability

Having served a couple of stints on PPBC, I know how the comprehensive fee gets determined, and the process is crying out for game-theoretical analysis. Each year, we try to guess what our peer schools will do, and we aim to be in the middle of the pack. Raise the fee too much, and other peer schools look like a better deal. But if we raise it less than our peer schools, then we are "leaving money on the table." This decision-making process has led to years of annual comprehensive fee increases of 3.5-4%. Demographic trends look challenging for large swaths of higher education for the coming years, especially in the northeast. Meanwhile, Connecticut College graduates must reckon with increasingly heavy and sometimes life-crushing student loan debt burdens. During my time as Chair of the Philosophy Department, I saw several of our most promising majors leave the college for financial reasons. And I've worked with an increasing number of students in recent years who have graduated early, also for financial reasons. I am ashamed to talk about our comprehensive fee with my neighbors whose kids are in high school.

I am especially worried about a possible vicious downward spiral: the ever-increasing comprehensive fee makes it more difficult to enroll the freshman class. And increasing the comprehensive fee does not necessarily make for more revenue, because each year more and more has to get diverted to financial aid. Enrollment problems, in turn, make it more difficult to put the brakes on the annual comprehensive fee increases. Even if we succeed in stabilizing

enrollments over the near term, perhaps with a smaller student body than in recent years, we have a big structural problem, which is that the college's entire operating model is predicated on annual comprehensive fee increases of 3.5-4%, a rate of increase that is very likely unsustainable. As an institution that is more tuition dependent that the schools we compete with in the admissions market, we are especially vulnerable to these pressures.

A top priority of the new dean of the faculty should be to insist on a more open and transparent discussion of the college's financial prospects and operating model. The faculty need to be a part of the larger conversation about how to make sure that our operating model is sustainable. This may require more open sharing of information with the faculty.

We should also be open to thinking critically about long-held assumptions about what a liberal arts education should look like, while remaining unflinchingly committed to promoting faculty/student inquiry and creative work.

For example, one approach might be to develop versions of a Connecticut College education for students outside of the traditional 18 to 22-year-old age range. That would be a move in the direction of fuller participation. As our student body shrinks, we might consider offering some sort of lower cost degree programs (possibly a masters degree in liberal studies, or something similar) for local retirees or military veterans or employees of the city of New London. Our return to college program is an excellent start, and I would argue for expanding it and promoting it, and developing different versions of it. This would be entirely in keeping with Connecticut College's founding mission of expanding educational access.

We should kick around other ideas, too. Some years ago, Roger Brooks advocated looking into 3-year degrees. I'm not sure I know enough about that option to have a view about it. But we need some creative thinking about the challenge of financial sustainability, on pain of sliding inexorably into overpriced mediocrity. Above all, the faculty need to be allowed to take greater ownership of the problem of achieving financial sustainability.

The Connections curriculum is an exciting improvement over our old distribution requirements, and it provides a good scaffolding to support the intellectual vision described above. In the Philosophy Department, for example, it has (I think) been liberating to consider replacing traditional intro courses with fresh ConnCourses and first-year seminars. But the Connections curriculum does not do much to address the structural problems with our operating model. Even if Connections helps us some in the admissions market, we may still get squeezed in a financial and demographic vise for years to come. Moreover, I have questions about our ability to sustain and expand the Connections curriculum, a curriculum that places a lot of demands on the faculty, as we enter what will likely be a period of resource scarcity and reduction of the faculty by attrition.

3. Equity

As a member of the Budget Equity Group (BEG), I have spent quite a bit of time, along with Candace Howes, Anne Bernhard, and David Jaffe, analyzing department and program budgets. One thing we saw is that there is a good deal of inequity in levels of departmental support. This experience left me with the sense that a very high priority for the new DoF should be looking at ways to promote budget equity. Currently, we BEGers are working on drawing up a set of principles for constructing department and program budgets. (For example, everybody needs a certain amount of funding per FTE for basic office and administrative costs. And everybody needs a certain amount of funding for programming, with additional funding that could be indexed to numbers of majors and minors). We are working with Abby Van Slyck on this now, and our group hopes to leave Abby and the next DoF with a set of principles that can be a focal point for discussion with chairs and directors. Ultimately there might need to be some re-allocation. For example, some departments have historically used their operating budgets to pay for individual faculty travel and professional memberships. That creates inequity, since not all faculty enjoy those benefits. Some of the departmental funds used in that way could eventually be reallocated to R.F. Johnson, where anyone could apply for them. We think the best approach, though, is to begin by building consensus among the chairs and directors; we'd like to craft principles that everyone can get on board with. It will be very important for the next DoF to continue this work. Inequities in funding, support, and compensation are demoralizing.

Promoting equity also means advocating for the faculty and the academic division vis-à-vis the other senior administrators. Of course, the DoF must also work collaboratively with their administrative colleagues on the senior administrative team—all of us are invested in the success of the College. But there is an important role for the DoF to play (in cooperation with the chairs of FSCC and PPBC) in raising questions about other administrative practices and decisions. For example, just this past fall, the college spent $28k to retain outside consultants to assist the Campus Food Services Working Group, which I served on. That decision was made over my strenuous objections. (I am happy to share the letter I wrote to the working group, including Rich Madonna and Trustee member David Barber.) For comparison, that one-time expenditure on consultants who only spent a couple of days on campus and got paid to give the same presentation to our working group three times is nearly enough to keep the Philosophy Department in business for four years. The $28k is someone's tuition money.

As we pursue more equitable budgeting and compensation on the academic side of things, it's important for the DoF to insist on similar budgetary rigor and transparency from the other senior administrators in their respective divisions. That has to mean less spending on consultants. It might mean rethinking other spending decisions. For just one small example, I have it on good authority that we could save thousands of dollars each year by holding Convocation indoors. (The cost of renting and setting up the tent is quite high.) In my view, it is important to avoid a situation where faculty are fighting over scarce resources while other spending decisions at the college go unquestioned.

Many of the largest inequities across departments, programs, and academic centers involve levels of endowed support. It's ordinarily not possible to reallocate endowed funds; nor should we want to. But we shouldn't just live with these inequities either. With this in mind, a priority for the

new DoF should be to open up and regularize communications between the faculty (especially Chairs and Directors) and College Advancement. We need to get College Advancement working for the faculty, and to do that with equity considerations in mind. We should place under-supported departments and programs at the front of the line for access to College Advancement. We also need to make sure that faculty leaders who are ramping up new programs and initiatives (e.g. Africana Studies, Global Islamic Studies, and Jewish Studies), curricular initiatives that have the support of the entire faculty, also get direct support from College Advancement. I also worry that we may be missing some opportunities to raise funds to support the work of the faculty. For example, a faculty member's retirement could be an occasion to raise money in that person's honor by reaching out to their former students.

Some of our deeply entrenched and rarely questioned practices exacerbate existing inequities. This isn't talked about much, but across-the-board (e.g. 2%) salary increases slowly magnify inequities that get established at the time of hire. If Professor A makes $75k annually, while Professor B makes $80k, and if both get a 2% increase every year, then Professor B effectively gets bigger raises every year. This can happen even if A and B are at the same rank and have the same years of service. The DoF should work more proactively with the Committee on Faculty Compensation to think about how we might do a better job promoting salary equity. This of course should go hand-in-hand with stronger advocacy (on PPBC and vis-à-vis the other senior administrators and the trustees) for faculty and staff compensation.

Another high priority for the next DoF should be to examine our practice of awarding stipends for various kinds of work. Many of us could probably give examples of inequities in stipends and course remissions. (For instance, the directors of the academic centers do not all get the same stipends.) We have to think about stipend inequity in tandem with salary inequity. Suppose Professor A, in the example above, takes on heavy service obligations that come with a $3,000 stipend. In that case, A is still making less than B, who is at the same rank, though A has taken on additional work and responsibilities. That seems unfair, yet I suspect it happens all the time. Nor has the college been very principled about which sorts of work get supported by stipends and which don't. For example, teaching a writing (W) course well involves a lot of additional grading and face time with students. It is surprising that we offer no support at all to faculty who teach W courses, while we invest heavily in other aspects of the curriculum. Why is teaching a W course less important than say, serving as a residential education fellow, which comes with a generous stipend ($5,000 per year)? Finally, our practice of awarding stipends for service work has the unintended side effect of disincentivizing research. Not only that, but our practice of awarding stipends for service work and curricular development looks a lot like a *de facto* merit pay system, but one that doesn't count research or service on elected committees as having any merit.

The college has serious inequities with respect to workspace. Some of our faculty offices and workspaces (e.g. in Blaustein, New London Hall) are enviable. But many colleagues (in Winthrop, Winthrop annex, Bill Hall, and other places around campus) have workspaces that fall way below what should be our standard of minimal adequacy. If I could give one specific example that I'm familiar with, the neuroscience lab spaces in Bill Hall are embarrassingly inadequate, even though Behavioral Neuroscience is one of our most successful academic programs. These are basic issues of faculty equity, and need to be thought of that way. I don't

think it's sufficient to have these issues included as one small part of a larger "master plan" written by consultants. We do not need expensive consultants to tell us that Winthrop and Bill Hall need attention. The recent Blaustein renovations are a welcome improvement, and the International Commons is an exciting idea, but that is an example of a campus renovation that got pushed forward without much regard for equity. How did fundraising for that project get prioritized over other faculty workspace issues?

Connecticut College has a surprisingly inconsistent and erratic record on spousal hiring. We have lost high-achieving colleagues because their academic spouses could not find work in the region. Some current members of the faculty have academic spouses who have not found work at the college, or have not been considered for desirable positions. In other cases, though, the college has made spousal hires. This is very much an equity issue, and one that obviously bears on faculty recruitment and retention. Crafting a spousal hiring policy would be an extraordinarily complicated challenge, but it might be something that the DoF could work on with FSCC. There are lots of pitfalls. And it's not clear how much we want to incentivize traditional marital relationships. There might be other proactive things that the DoF could do to address this issue, like looking into forming a mutual support network with other institutions in the region, where we agree to prioritize the hiring of each other's academic spouses. I really do not know what the right approach is to this issue; I just know that the inconsistency is deeply demoralizing.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we need to offer more support for faculty who are not on the tenure track. The nature of adjunct and visiting positions means that it is really hard for some of our colleagues to be represented via the shared governance system. In my years at the college, there has only been one time when I found myself complicit in something that struck me as obviously unethical. As Chair of the Philosophy Department a few years ago, I had received authorization to replace 4 or 5 courses, on account of sabbaticals. I asked for permission to hire a one-year visitor to teach all of those courses, and I had a willing and capable candidate ready to take the job. But I was told that I would have to hire multiple adjuncts so that the college would not have to pay fringe benefits. This made me feel complicit in a yucky system. I know that budgetary realities limit what you can do, but it just has to be possible for the DoF and Associate DoF to work with department chairs to find better approaches than this. One approach might be to work with chairs and directors do to more multiyear planning. For example, we might have been willing to forego hiring adjuncts for one academic year if we could get a full-time visitor (with benefits) the following year. This might be an instance of a more general problem with our budgeting practices, which that we have no good system for allowing units at the college to do budgetary planning over a 2- or 3-year time frame.

A closely related issue concerns adjunct compensation. Many of us get upset when our salaries are frozen for a year or even half a year. However, the per-course adjunct compensation rate often remains frozen for years at a time. When I was department chair I pressed the DoF about some of these issues, and the response that I got was that our adjunct compensation is pretty generous by regional standards. That's true, but it's not the right comparison when all institutions of higher education are exploiting adjunct labor.

Most of these inequities are not the fault of anyone in particular. But they take a toll on faculty morale. They just accrete over time, as a result of individual decisions and (too often) behind-

the-scenes negotiations. I worry about a system in which the privileges go to the most forceful and persistent self-advocates. Some of these inequities are systemic and will be really hard—though not impossible—to do anything about, especially when the financial sustainability of our basic operating model is in doubt. Yet it does not speak well of us as an academic institution that prizes social justice and full participation that we are willing to live with these sorts of inequities.

In all of this, I'm guided by something I heard Candace Howes say a few years ago: "Your budget reflects your values." Budgeting is applied ethics.

4. Inclusivity, Full Participation, and Academic Freedom

In the last few years, a series of cases at institutions across the country, including our own, have highlighted what can sometimes appear to be a latent tension between inclusivity and academic freedom, values that (hopefully) all of us in academia care about and are committed to promoting. Each of these cases is unique, but many of them involve offensive speech, and/or protests against campus speakers.

On the one hand, our commitment to inclusivity is a commitment to engaging with humanity and kindness in joint inquiry and creative work with students and colleagues whose life experiences and social positions may be very different from our own. This commitment may sometimes require a critical response to something that a member of our community or an invited speaker says or writes. Inclusivity also means that we should try to extend that humanity to people who say things to which we have strong moral objections. On the other hand, a commitment to academic freedom means that that there must be an extremely strong presumption against imposing any institutional punishments or penalties on members of the community (whether students or faculty) who express themselves in ways that seem at odds with the values of full participation and inclusivity, or who have political views that might be in tension with those values. Commitment to academic freedom means that we should not punish people for what they say, and it requires giving maximal deference to departments, programs, centers, and student groups who may wish to invite controversial speakers. Of course, it also means giving maximal deference to members of the community who protest nonviolently or engage in public moral critique.

These are extraordinarily difficult issues in practice. Intellectual clarity is sorely needed, and difficult to come by. And these are problems for everyone in academia, not just us. We're not helped by the fact that much of the wider public discussion of campus free speech issues is polemical and of low quality. Nor are we helped by the fact that technology makes available many forms of retaliation and intimidation which themselves could be protected by academic freedom, and are certainly protected by the first amendment. Nor again are we helped by the fact that social media has eroded boundaries between professional academic contexts (e.g. the classroom) and private/personal contexts. Even worse, discussions of campus free speech are taking place in a context in which higher education itself has become politicized, where many people believe (whether rightly or wrongly) that academic institutions like ours skew too far to the political left. It's also taking place in a political context in which offensive speech has become more normalized.

A high priority of the new Dean of the Faculty should be to work closely with, and possibly meet regularly with both John McKnight and the campus chapter of the AAUP to think through these issues. SGA, FSCC, the Office of Communications, and maybe even Staff Council should be part of those discussions too. The DoF has a role to play as a convener of discussions of free speech issues.

Especially important, in my view, is the need to protect the academic freedom of students, staff, and faculty members who do not yet (and may never) enjoy the protections or the security of tenure, and whose identities may make them especially vulnerable to various kinds of online intimidation and retaliation.

Another special concern of mine is that much of the broader discussion of campus free speech issues has focused one-sidedly on academic freedom, without much attention given to the distinctive professional responsibilities of educators. I believe strongly that our role as professional educators comes with very special ethical obligations toward students. The AAUPs statement on professional ethics would be a good focal point for discussion.

It can sometimes be important for administrators, perhaps especially the Dean of the Faculty, as the chief academic officer of the college, to share their own considered views about things, as long as that's done professionally and in a spirit of conversational inquiry. The crucial distinction between expressing one's individual views and speaking from an institutional perspective complicates this. But administrators (especially a dean who is "of the faculty") enjoy academic freedom, too, and political controversy has a way of making partisans of the quiet, anyhow.

There might be some other small, easy, but potentially very helpful things that the DoF could do. For example, it could be interesting to work with SGA and the AAUP chapter to put on an event for students on "Demystifying tenure," or "What is academic freedom all about?" One thing I learned during the spring of 2015 is that many of our students have very little understanding of what the tenure system is all about, or what tenure even means. Having some discussions about this could have other benefits—for example, for first-generation college students who might aspire to go to graduate school and pursue academic careers.

For what it's worth, I do bring a little bit of scholarly expertise to questions about activism and protest, as I've published (here and here) on the ethics of vandalism and property destruction as forms of radical environmental action. (For the record, I am critical of those things, though the arguments in favor of them are more interesting than people realize.)

5. Supporting Faculty with Diverse Life and Career Experiences

Connecticut College absolutely has to be a place where faculty of color, women faculty, LGBTQIA faculty, faculty of different ages, faculty from different religious and cultural backgrounds, and faculty with disabilities can thrive, eventually joining the ranks of full professors holding endowed chairs. Making sure that the college is a place where this happens involves lots of small things done well over the long run—lots of humanity and

professionalism—and lots of patient work with department chairs, with the Committee on the Status of Faculty Women, with our Dean for Equity and Inclusion, and with search committees. It also requires attention to the structural inequalities that are part of the background context of all of our professional lives. The DoF should be curious about the academic experiences and intellectual aspirations of all faculty members, as well as job candidates.

On a more practical note, one potentially powerful tool that the college could use to further diversify the faculty is the career endowed chairs. We have a lot of them, and we rarely use them to recruit distinguished senior faculty. As endowed chairs become available due to retirements, the next DoF should consider using them (subject to the constraints of the staffing plan and the donors' intents) to recruit senior faculty from groups underrepresented in academia. If appointed, I would be the first DoF in a while who does not have an endowed chair. If any came open for which I might qualify, I would prefer to explore the option of using it for recruiting.

One area where Connecticut College's track record on inclusivity is especially bad is disability access and accommodation. Note that the DoF office is on the second floor of Fanning Hall, a building with no elevator. This is a very serious area of weakness at the college that needs to be addressed. We should also think about ways of giving issues of disability more attention in our classes and in the curriculum.

Another priority of the new DoF should be to look at our processes for mentoring associate professors. This is really important for retaining cherished colleagues, and for making sure that everyone at the college has a rewarding career. My own experience as an associate professor was full of uncertainty and guessing. I couldn't tell what the promotion standards really were, and I had no clear idea about when to think about going up for promotion. I couldn't tell if promotion to full professor was a routine thing that one does after 6 or 7 years, of if it was some kind of distinction reserved for those who've made really significant contributions to their fields. I actually ran for election to CAPT the first time partly so I could figure out what the promotion standards were, which is kind of ridiculous. And I was a privileged white guy with the benefit of good department chairs and a supportive department. I think we should look at data concerning timing of promotions for women faculty, LGBTQIA faculty, and faculty of color. I wonder if, on average, white male faculty members like me have a shorter time to promotion than others do. If so, that is a huge problem sitting right under our noses, and one that could call for a serious rethink of policy and practice. This affects lots of things, including (for example) who gets to enter the running for Dean of the Faculty. If I were appointed DoF, this is something that I would want to work on, beginning with some data collection, perhaps with help from John Nugent. In addition to data collection, the DoF should draw upon the expertise of, and try to learn more about the experiences of LGBTQIA faculty, women faculty, and faculty of color. What sort of guidance have our colleagues gotten? Have colleagues thought about leaving the college after receiving tenure? If so, why? Here it's really important to do some listening—not just one time, but on a regular basis.

6. Shared Governance

One problem with our shared governance system is that we often create situations where faculty (and sometimes staff and students) put in many hours of time on committees and working groups, and yet when all is said and done, those committees and working groups have no real decision-making authority. At best, they make recommendations or play an advisory role. It often takes stipends to induce faculty to do this work (see above). Sometimes, faculty members end up taking political heat for decisions over which they had little real control. I've had a lot of experience of this sort of thing—including most recently my service on the Campus Food Services Working Group. This sort of practice sucks up faculty time and energy, diverting that time and energy away from teaching and research, without giving the faculty much of a say in the decisions that really matter. In other words, our practice of creating task forces and working groups without empowering them to make real decisions creates the appearance of shared governance without the reality. And once you see what's really going on—i.e., that the faculty often are doing lots of work without having any real jurisdiction over anything—committee work rapidly becomes frustrating and alienating. We tend to assume that more working groups and task forces means more shared governance, but that assumption is badly mistaken. One can hardly blame colleagues who check out from shared governance to focus on their research and teaching. I don't think it's reasonable to criticize colleagues for not participating more in shared governance when so many of our committees and working groups are window dressing for decisions that the senior administrators are making behind the scenes.

The DoF could play a positive role in giving the faculty more control over the direction of the college. This might mean creating fewer working groups and relying more on standing committees, but then empowering them to make real decisions. It might also mean sharing more information with the faculty and gently pressuring other senior administrators to do the same. I think it means deferring to FSCC, for the most part, with respect to setting the legislative agenda and giving the faculty some space to do business independently of the administration (including the DoF). The DoF should also be willing to go along sometimes with faculty initiatives that they might have doubts about. The DoF's job is not to make an individual mark on the college. We should be ambitious, but our ambition has to be collective, and it has to be channeled institutionally.

Communication between the faculty and the DoF is also extremely important. One aspect of this is just answering emails. But there might be other ways of opening up access: For example, perhaps the DoF could hold regular conversation times or open meetings somewhere outside Fanning Hall, and some place where anyone with accessibility issues can easily get to. I might propose an open lunch hour in Cro on Wednesdays when anyone could drop by to talk, or (because I am a coffee fiend), a weekly "office hour" in the Blue Camel.

As the college enters what could be a protracted period of contraction and resource scarcity, jurisdiction over academic budgets and the staffing plan could give the next DoF a great deal of power. In light of this, the next DoF should adhere to a principle of forbearance: One should try to minimize the application of administrative power, keeping interventions small, and intervening only when there is a clear way to promote some of the values discussed here: faculty/student collaboration, equity, and full participation. Difficult times could be less

adversarial if we let department and program chairs do some of the difficult work of coming up with creative proposals.

Another simple thing that the DoF could do to promote transparency and shared governance would be to work with John Nugent to survey the faculty regularly on how the DoF office is doing. This would be a good way to get a sense of what colleagues think without waiting four years for the official DoF review process.

We should be mindful that shared governance is, in a way, always up for negotiation. My sense from talking with colleagues at other institutions is that Connecticut College has an unusually strong tradition of shared governance. But we should be sensitive about transfers of power. I can remember when FSCC retained control of the staffing plan, for example. One concern I have about Connections is that when we proceeded with implementation before having all the details worked out, some degree of control over the curriculum migrated from the faculty (especially EPC) to the administration.

7. The Faculty Development Process

As a CAPT member (now in my second term) I've learned a lot about what makes for successful 3rd year review, tenure and promotion cases. I've also learned a lot about the various ways in which things can go wrong. Perhaps not everyone knows that the DoF does not actually make recommendations on any personnel reviews. The DoF does play an advisory role to the president. But technically, according to IFF, the DoF has no direct "say" in review cases.

One virtue of this system is that it frees the DoF up to play the role of a neutral facilitator. This role is unbelievably important, because it uniquely positions the DoF to work to prevent things from going badly. In fact, the DoF is the only person who engages in every single aspect of the faculty development process, beginning with meetings with job candidates, and concluding with the awarding of endowed chairs. The DoF has a role to play in working with departments and department chairs to make sure that things are done in accordance with IFF and that assistant and associate professors get appropriate professional guidance. Clarity about things like the tenure clock and the optimal timing of promotion reviews is of utmost importance. The DoF has a further role to play in making sure that there is consistency across campus, so that different departments approach the review process in the same way, and with the same conscientiousness. Through all of this the goal is really simple: to help every single member of the faculty flourish and overshoot the college's high standards of excellence.

Our system actually leaves the DoF some space to do some things that we've never done before, but which could be good. I think it would be permitted by IFF for the DoF to have semi-regular meetings with untenured colleagues. These would be informal conversations, not about the faculty member's performance, but about the nature and quality of the mentoring and guidance that the department and the college are offering. This would give the DoF valuable information, relatively early in the process. What do to with that information would be complicated, as such conversations should probably remain confidential, but there might be ways for the dean to work with departments to improve the quality of mentoring so as to help candidates succeed. This

would also highlight the fact that all of us on campus bear responsibility for the faculty development process. Whether this is a helpful idea might be something to discuss with FSCC, with chairs and directors, and also with untenured faculty. In making this suggestion, I am thinking about some of the things I've seen as a CAPT member, where there are differences in the quality and consistency of mentoring that candidates receive in different departments—another equity issue.

8. The Staffing Plan in a Time of Contraction

Perhaps the biggest challenge for the next DoF will be to manage the staffing plan at a time when the size of the faculty will likely get reduced in order to adjust to a smaller student body, and the resource scarcity which that entails. This will probably happen gradually via attrition, and decisions not to replace colleagues who retire or depart the college, or to combine tenure lines into joint appointments. We need to be really open about the fact that this is going to be a horrible process. The college's structural problems will place the DoF in a position of having to make decisions that will understandably be loathed and resisted by many. And we may have to do this while knowing that some flourishing departments and programs (e.g. Behavioral Neuroscience, Film Studies, Arabic Studies) are currently understaffed. We've also got some newer interdisciplinary programs (Africana Studies, Global Islamic Studies, and maybe an incipient program in Jewish Studies) that need further support. Nor is it clear that the contraction will be temporary. I confess that I do not have enough information about the college's financial state to say just how dire things are. Greater transparency with the faculty about the college's financial situation could make this process easier.

Nevertheless, there might be creative approaches worth considering. Some years ago, Roger Brooks made a deal with the Economics Department to "sabbatical proof" the department. The idea was that they would get an extra tenure line in exchange for losing the ability to hire sabbatical replacements. This could be done in reverse: Perhaps a department could be given the option of keeping a retiring colleague's tenure line in exchange for sabbatical proofing. Such an approach would protect the size of the tenure-track faculty while reducing the institution's reliance on adjuncts.

Along the way, we might decide to rethink and reorganize departmental and program structures. This is really complicated, because we might need to consider both disciplinary integrity and equity issues that arise for faculty in small departments. (For example, consider the case of a chair of a three FTE department with two untenured colleagues. That chair might have to defer sabbatical for some years while mentoring pre-tenure colleagues. Deferring sabbatical might mean postponing one's own promotion review, which means loss of salary over the course of a career. This is a very, very serious equity issue.) My approach to this issue would be fairly straightforward. In keeping with the principle of forbearance, I don't think the DoF should foist any reorganization or departmental mergers on the faculty. However, the DoF should be completely open to proposals coming from the faculty. The DoF's main role in such cases should be to serve as a facilitator and consensus-builder as well as an equity watchdog.

9. Academic interests

When we select a DoF from among the faculty, we are getting a person with particular intellectual interests and experience. In my case, I've spent my entire professional career thinking about the natural sciences, especially the life and earth sciences. I've co-authored papers with scientists and have given talks to scientific audiences. Though I'm a humanist by training and predilection, I'm really interested in research and teaching practices in the sciences and naturally gravitate in that direction. I've sought out service work that gives me a chance to hang out with our colleagues in the sciences (for example on the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee). Perhaps my professional interest in the sciences would help complement Katherine Bergeron's interest in the arts.

One thing about me that may be less widely known is that I was a German major in college. Before that I was a Congress-Bundestag youth exchange student in Germany. Since then, I've had two international Fulbright fellowships (in Germany and Canada), as well as a visiting sabbatical fellowship in Austria. I've taught at a summer institute in Portugal, to a group of graduate students from over a dozen countries. So I am really interested in language study and international outreach, and I would look forward to working with the Associate Dean for Global Initiatives to keep building our international programs. I'm deeply committed to the integrity of our foreign language programs. Some years ago, as an FSCC member, I helped resist an effort by Roger Brooks to merge the German and Slavic Studies departments.

Finally, one thing I would bring to the senior administrative team is a seriousness about environmental issues. I feel sometimes that we forget what amazing environmental traditions we have at Connecticut College. We are the college of Richard Goodwin and Bill Niering. We have the arboretum, the Goodwin-Niering Center, and a thriving Environmental Studies program with a real depth of faculty expertise. We have a strong Office of Sustainability, a Faculty Director of Sustainability (who is also our incoming FSCC chair), and a curricular pathway on Sustainability and Social Justice. We have a revived Environmental Model Committee. The college has hosted major conferences in recent years on pollinators, food sustainability, and global environmental justice. We have active student groups: CC Divest, Sprout, Oceana, and ConnCARES. I believe in my heart that with respect to environmental thought and action, Connecticut College is very close to being a standout among small liberal arts colleges. But our efforts lack unity, and have not always been prioritized by the senior administrative team. Our website, for example is full of information about Connections, but does little to foreground our environmental efforts and traditions. And I encourage everyone to do a little research on the pesticides that we routinely apply to Tempel Green.

Different DoF candidates will bring different academic interests to the table, but I can see using an administrative position as a means to consolidate and advance our environmental work. We could have a dean for environmental initiatives without creating a new administrative position.

10. Staying Engaged in Faculty Work

One concern about the DoF position itself is that even though the DoF remains a faculty member, one could end up really isolated and alienated from one's colleagues. I also worry a lot about getting stuck in Fanning Hall and rarely having any interactions with students. I've been teaching for 20 years, and I can scarcely imagine not doing it. I am not at all sure how feasible this is, but I think it would be healthy if the DoF occasionally taught or team-taught a course. This might be difficult to do during the first year of administrative service, because it will take a ton of work just to figure out how to do the job competently. But my logic class is a well-oiled machine, and I could probably teach it responsibly on occasion while fulfilling the obligations of the DoF role. Doing this might help one maintain one's identity as a faculty member.

Team teaching might be an interesting way for the DoF to stay engaged in the classroom from time to time. Larry Vogel and I have talked about someday co-teaching a seminar on the philosophy of Susanne K. Langer. It could be a powerful thing for the DoF to do a college seminar on the work of a significant Connecticut College professor. It could also be incredibly interesting for the DoF to team up with a colleague to co-teach a seminar on current issues in higher education. I can't think of a better way to set the right tone as we work collectively to address some of the problems I've described here. Why not continue to blur the boundaries between teaching, research, and administrative work?

Thanks to the search committee, to President Bergeron, and to the entire faculty for considering me for the dean of the faculty position. It is an honor to have been nominated, and whatever the outcome of the search, I hope that some of these ideas contribute positively to our discussion of the future of Connecticut College.