

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE
PLAN FOR A NEW CENTURY

Introduction

Bryn Mawr College seeks to provide a genuinely rigorous education and to encourage the pursuit of knowledge as preparation for life and work. The College shares these goals and its fundamental character as a residential liberal arts college with a cohort of other highly selective schools. Yet those of us familiar with Bryn Mawr can attest with great conviction to the unique traditions and distinctive qualities that set this institution apart. We describe several of these abiding qualities below, since they define who we are and who we will be. They lay the groundwork for how Bryn Mawr will educate as we begin the twenty-first century.

1. The Scholarly Community. Bryn Mawr is a women's college that was founded in 1885 to give women access to the most challenging courses of study then available. The College's passionate commitment to the education of women for all walks of life continues to shape its identity and to drive its most extraordinary achievements. We fully acknowledge that the status of women in American higher education has changed dramatically, and for the better, in the past century. Indeed, we pride ourselves on having played an important role in that transformation. And yet we firmly believe that critical work remains to be done at women's colleges like Bryn Mawr.

Within the group of institutions once known as the Seven Sisters, Bryn Mawr is regarded as the "academic" or "scholarly sister" because of the rigor of its curriculum and the unequalled success of the College's alumnae in earning advanced degrees. No other college or university, public or private, sends a higher proportion of women on to receive the Ph.D. Bryn Mawr may also be the most successful in encouraging women to aspire to advanced study in the natural and physical sciences and in mathematics. This is not to say that all our undergraduates become, or should become, academics. Experience proves that they take the lead in an extensive range of professions, including public service, the arts, law, business, and medicine. Whatever career a Bryn Mawr graduate chooses, she brings the College's characteristic commitment to the highest standards, its emphasis on critical thinking and writing, and its sense of rigorous application to the task.

Bryn Mawr has a superb faculty with a long tradition of dedication to teaching and scholarship. The faculty fulfills the promise that active scholars make the

most exciting and effective teachers. As one might expect at an institution with a student:faculty ratio of 9:1, Bryn Mawr students develop close working relationships with their professors. Faculty members view students as younger colleagues, and thus encourage them to take themselves seriously as scholars and to set their standards accordingly. Students are expected to undertake independent research, whether in the laboratory, the field, or the archive. They also have at their disposal one of the richest library systems at any liberal arts college, including the combined collections of Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore Colleges and a full complement of online electronic services.

Bryn Mawr's culture of academic achievement is embodied in a tradition of graduate education, which at one point made the College in effect the smallest university in the country. The College's ongoing commitment to selected graduate and professional programs in the arts and sciences and in social work supports a scholarly continuum across the generations. Graduate women and men transmit to undergraduates the excitement and the dedication inspired by advanced research; they expand the mentoring available to their younger colleagues. The quality and energy of the academic program at Bryn Mawr depend not only on the intelligence and hard work of individuals but also on the close interaction of undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members within a college setting.

2. The Size of the College. Bryn Mawr remains an unusually small institution. Although this denies us the economies of scale enjoyed by many of our peers, it also offers us a distinctive strength. Bryn Mawr's intimate scale fosters a strong sense of community among a strikingly diverse and highly individualistic group of students. Bryn Mawr students are engaged to an extraordinary degree in helping to shape and run the College. They are the arbiters of a vital academic and social Honor Code; they are members of virtually all faculty and administrative committees; they serve on selection committees for faculty and staff; and they send representatives to the Board of Trustees. Within this highly participatory environment, Bryn Mawr sustains a culture that teaches and models integrity, embraces individuality and independence of mind while fostering a sense of belonging to the whole, and cultivates students' capacities for leadership and service.

3. The Setting: Bryn Mawr and Greater Philadelphia. The College's beautiful and historic campus is one of our great treasures. Our striking collegiate Gothic architecture and our rolling landscape foster a sense both of serious purpose and of peaceful reflection. Yet, Bryn Mawr's location just twelve miles from the center of Philadelphia gives faculty, students, and staff ready access to a wealth of cultural, social, and scholarly opportunities. The city is a magnet for the work of social scientists. It is a center of scientific, technological, and medical innovation and research, and it remains an extraordinary historic and cultural resource with a vigorous commitment to the fine and performing arts. The city's appealing yet affordable restaurants, lively music scene, and varied movie houses are within

easy reach of public transportation. In addition, regularly scheduled and frequent train service along the northeast corridor makes travel to Washington and New York speedy and convenient.

4. The Consortium. In the belief that the future strength of liberal arts colleges depends on their ability to work closely with surrounding institutions, Bryn Mawr has long cultivated the potential of its proximity to Haverford, Swarthmore, and the University of Pennsylvania. These relationships substantively enhance the intellectual and social lives of students and faculty. Our special partnership with Haverford affords students from both campuses a range of curricular offerings that neither institution could mount independently. Many academic programs are offered jointly, and students at each college complete, on average, one fifth of their coursework at the other. This extraordinary degree of cooperation is unusual among academic consortia.

Bryn Mawr, like all small liberal arts colleges, faces challenges. It is engaged in keen competition for the best undergraduates, without whom Bryn Mawr's distinctive rigor would make little sense, and without whom the College's financial viability would erode. It also faces keen competition for the best graduate students, without whom the presence of graduate programs would no longer strengthen and invigorate the College's intellectual life. Our small size means that we must confront with limited resources the recruiting challenges our competitors pose. We must take special care to deploy our funding strategically, and we must seek to generate the added resources required to prepare our students effectively for the twenty-first century. Our limitations must not be a cause for resigned inaction, but rather an inducement to creative thinking and practice. Bryn Mawr's "Plan for a New Century" seeks to sustain and build on our distinctive qualities and to speak in compelling ways to future generations of students.

Two major challenges face the College in the first decade of the new century: 1) we must foster innovation without significant expansion; and 2) we must recruit and retain the most qualified students. The two sections of this Plan, "Educating for a New Century" and "Building the Bryn Mawr of the Future," address these fundamental imperatives. Our dual goals provide the benchmarks by which the College will be able to measure the Plan's success.

Educating for a New Century

However one might describe the College of the past, Bryn Mawr is now primarily an undergraduate women's college complemented and made distinctive by the presence of a small number--and a strong tradition--of coeducational graduate and professional programs. Our principal goal is to prepare young women from a wide range of backgrounds for the challenges and careers of the future. Above all, our Plan calls for investment in academic and associated co-curricular activities to accomplish five broad, nonprioritized objectives that we consider both critical to meeting the needs of the next

generation of highly motivated students and firmly rooted in the College's traditional strengths.

1. Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to live and work in a global environment.

Bryn Mawr has always been international in both its undergraduate and graduate programs. It must now embrace the world as never before. A sizable number of Bryn Mawr students hope to pursue careers in nongovernmental organizations, in international agencies, and in corporations operating on a global scale. They will in ever increasing numbers live in Latin America, do business in Africa, and take cultural excursions to Asia. We must direct our appreciable international expertise to making Bryn Mawr more focused on preparing students for life and work in the highly interdependent world and global economy of the twenty-first century. We must build on our tradition of superb language instruction and enhance our attention to foreign cultures so that our graduates can communicate with people from every corner of the world. The work of many of our social scientists is international in orientation, and our students have been quick to make the connection (through double majors and major/minor combinations) between language fluency and advanced knowledge of global cultures and communities, of international economics and politics. We would do well to strengthen the connections across existing departments and programs to enrich these areas within our curriculum. We should also expand the opportunities for our students to study and work abroad during their Bryn Mawr years, possibly with the assistance of our extensive network of international alumnae/i.

Bryn Mawr is one of the few American colleges offering financial aid to international undergraduates. As a result, the College attracts many extraordinary applicants. Some can pay their way, but all too often the extreme financial need of others cannot be met, and they cannot enroll. We will seek additional funds for such students, who keep the College linked to the world and bring a rich diversity to classroom discussions, student life, and the overall educational experience at Bryn Mawr.

2. Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to thrive in a context of rapid scientific change.

The College must continue to excel in the sciences. We must ensure that all Bryn Mawr students become literate in the concepts, processes, and goals of science, in order that they may be informed and active participants in a world increasingly affected by advances in scientific knowledge. We must engage all students, regardless of their choice of major, in considering the position of science within the context of changes in society. To these ends, we must encourage innovative teaching in the sciences and in interdisciplinary areas.

Bryn Mawr is one of the most successful colleges or universities in the country, on a per capita basis, in encouraging women to pursue advanced study in the natural and physical sciences and in mathematics. One-third of our

undergraduates are science majors; in 1999-2000, 10% of the members of the junior class are mathematics majors. We must advertise such facts and improve our efforts to recruit young women with a talent for science. And we must identify more clearly and support more effectively the factors that contribute to our extraordinary record.

Park Science Center, with its Collier Library, constitutes the kind of integrated facility for science teaching and research that many institutions are only now constructing. Bryn Mawr must continue to build on the accomplishments of our previous campaign, and we must deliver the resources to support faculty and student interest in both disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas of investigation. Our strong emphasis on undergraduate research must be enhanced. We must reach out still more aggressively and persuasively to the extensive science and technology sector in the Philadelphia area to develop internships for our students and to establish a base of relationships for our faculty as well. We must support Bryn Mawr students committed to teaching science and mathematics at the pre-college level, particularly given the escalating shortage of teachers in these subjects. We plan to introduce a postdoctoral program for young scientists seeking teaching careers, a program of particular importance because of our focus on, and success with, women in the sciences. We must test the viability of our science doctoral programs by providing stipends at competitive levels and by ensuring that our distinctive pattern of graduate science education (mentors working with extremely small numbers of students) speaks to current modes of science pedagogy.

3. **Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to work with, and give shape to, the powerful new information technologies that are transforming our society.** Our nation and the world are in the midst of an information revolution, one which has its origins in computing and network technology but which is expanding rapidly and unpredictably. The nature, magnitude, and speed of this cultural change will demand increasing levels of skill and understanding within the population as a whole, and will continue to provide opportunities for visionary leadership.

We must ensure that all Bryn Mawr graduates are conversant and comfortable with the technologies they use, both for scholarship and for daily life, and have the ability to learn and apply new technologies that will be designed in the future. This is a goal of particular salience for women. We must transform the campus into a technologically rich and sophisticated environment that encourages the creative use of information technology in all areas of our programs and operations. This process, already underway, will continue with a modernization of Canaday library that will change the ways in which Bryn Mawr faculty, staff, and students gain access to knowledge as well as provide facilities for the study of new media. We will continue to encourage our faculty to make use of advancing information technology in the classroom. Our tri-college consortium may well consider using distance learning to expand course options, giving professors the

ability to teach discussion-based seminars to students on the Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore campuses simultaneously. Such technology holds great promise for bringing alumnae/i into greater continuing contact with the College, and for creating new opportunities for lifelong learning.

We must also embrace technology as a topic of study across the curriculum, so that Bryn Mawr graduates acquire a critical understanding of the roles technology plays in our society and the impact and implications of its uses in a range of contexts. As a liberal arts institution, we must prepare our graduates to help guide dialogue and decision-making about how technology ought to be used, not just how it can be used.

We must ensure that students planning to pursue careers in technology gain the requisite training and experience to prepare them for work at the cutting edge of research and development. The technology industry urgently needs talent, and the striking scarcity of women in the field suggests a compelling role for a women's college with our record of achievement in the sciences. We must offer our students the opportunity to prepare to become engineers, software developers, designers of entirely new technologies, or leaders in adapting or applying technology in a wide range of fields. We must expand our small program in computer science, support interdisciplinary collaborations that expose more students to the study of technology, and cultivate internship opportunities within the local industry and in companies where our alumnae already are making their influence felt.

4. Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to meet the challenge of leading and serving in diverse communities.

One of Bryn Mawr's greatest distinctions as a residential college is our commitment to building a diverse and pluralistic community in which students learn from and are enriched by the variety of perspectives they encounter. Increasingly diverse generations of students experiment with creating and sustaining a self-governing society within the College, structured in part by the standards of a social and academic Honor Code, and in part by the oldest student Self-Government Association in the United States. These traditions rely on and cultivate students' capacities for mutual respect, personal integrity, service, and leadership.

Bryn Mawr students, faculty, staff, and alumnae/i have always carried their sense of civic responsibility to the varied communities that lie beyond the confines of our suburban campus. Stemming from the College's Quaker roots, our commitment to understanding the world, engaging with it, and transforming it for the better has been longstanding. Among the College's greatest attractions is our location within one of the nation's largest and most diverse metropolitan areas. We will expand opportunities for our students to serve the community through work and learning experiences. We will encourage them to test their career goals through meaningful and instructive internships in the richly diverse business,

educational, and professional community of our region. We will seek ways to make the College, arguably the region's most illustrious institution dedicated to the advancement of women through education, an important participant in discussions about the status and ambitions of women, engaging students, faculty, and alumnae in the process.

In these initiatives we will primarily, though not exclusively, build on the energy and knowledge of our strong departments and programs in the social sciences. In addition, the presence of a coeducational Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research provides connections and capabilities that are unique among small colleges. The School offers expertise in a wide range of fields, including law and social policy, race and ethnicity, child welfare, substance abuse, juvenile and criminal justice, gerontology, women's issues, poverty, and health care. Faculty members are closely associated with public and private human services departments and institutions; they provide substantial consultative assistance to organizations and individuals throughout the region. There are numerous ways in which the School's faculty can inform the development of interdisciplinary courses as well as give shape to social science internships and service learning. Strategies for closer collaboration between the School and the undergraduate College, to the benefit of both, should be pursued when the School embarks on its own planning process in the spring of 2000.

5. Bryn Mawr graduates must be prepared to take the lead in the world of arts and letters.

Bryn Mawr is renowned in the academy and in the community for its influential role in the arts and the humanities. Though we might imagine a twenty-first century driven by advances in science and technology, we must nonetheless remain critical stewards of the human cultural production of the past and engaged mentors to that of the future. Indeed, both of our highly ranked graduate programs--art history and classics (including archaeology)--are in the humanities. Many of our most distinguished academic, scholarly and professional alumnae/i have excelled in this broad range of disciplines. Our strength here is legendary.

We must ensure that our humanities programs thrive, and that those engaged in them are encouraged to investigate the newest and most exciting areas of scholarship, many of which are multidisciplinary. We must also ensure that contemporary technologies of artistic production become part of our repertory, particularly in the musical, theatrical, and visual arts. We must engage a still broader range of faculty and undergraduates in the intellectual, curricular and co-curricular life fostered by the presence of graduate students, and we must make the best possible use of the College's new and extraordinary academic resource, the Rhys Carpenter Library.

With the division of responsibility for the fine and performing arts between Bryn Mawr and Haverford, Bryn Mawr's focus on dance and theater, together with a major share in creative writing, has resulted in distinctiveness and

accomplishment in those areas. These successes have been achieved despite the less-than-ideal facilities in which rehearsal as well as performance must be conducted. If a fully renovated arts center remains a somewhat ambitious and distant goal, more modest goals must be met in the short term: a small theater, additional gallery space, and improved dance space. We see a growing interest on the part of students in including arts courses in their programs of study, no matter what their majors. Instead of drawing a line between the arts and the traditional academic programs, it should be possible to take a cue from student practice and explore further ways to connect the two. We must also expand relationships with the vital humanities and arts communities of Philadelphia, including the new Penn Humanities Forum.

In emphasizing the five objectives sketched above we seek to redirect and consolidate our energies rather than to set out into wholly unfamiliar territory. Many existing departments and programs at the College--especially our interdisciplinary and other extra-departmental programs--would benefit from additional support. We will work to add resources where there is a demonstrated need, a record of strong performance, and a compelling curricular agenda that will help us meet our objectives. Our work in the coming years will involve striking a number of balances: between excellent existing programs and bold new initiatives; between disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies; between theoretical and practical learning.

We also propose to establish a limited number of "centers" to encourage innovation between and within existing departments and programs. The hallmark of these interrelated centers will be their flexibility, their ability to adapt to changing circumstances. They will not be permanent departments or programs; faculty will not hold appointments in them; they will not offer majors. Rather they are intended to address the immobility plaguing institutions of higher education in general, an immobility created both by a continuing departmental structure that maintains a nineteenth-century vision of the academy and by a response to the limitations of that vision which resulted in establishing nondepartmental programs. As access to information has expanded and as meaningful challenges have been posed to the nineteenth-century order of knowledge, we have tended to generate new quasi-departments at each disciplinary intersection or in each new area of inquiry. In the current environment, with little more than one hundred tenure-track or tenured faculty and more than thirty majors, we can no longer persist in generating new, but nonetheless equally rigid, administrative structures as fields evolve and emerge. Simply put, a practice of unbounded addition with no attendant subtraction is not viable. Rather, we need to create flexible ways to develop and maintain an innovative edge in the extra-curricular intellectual life of the College and in the curriculum itself. The proposed centers are designed to prompt ongoing change.

At a minimum, a center might consist of a part-time director drawn from the faculty, an inclusive steering committee made up of colleagues from a variety of disciplines, and sufficient staffing to provide administrative and clerical support. At a maximum, a center might also welcome postdoctoral fellows, visiting scholars, and visiting professionals on short term or one-year appointments. Each center would require

a seminar room and offices. Most of these needs for space can be met within the square footage gained through the conversion to instructional and office space of the currently unused Bettws-y-Coed and through programming the proposed centers into the renovations of Dalton and Thomas.*

Each center would create a community-wide forum through scheduling conferences, lectures, and colloquia. Topics might be usefully clustered around a broad theme each year with an eye to maintaining focus and to assuring engagement with the most meaningful scholarship in a variety of disciplines. A center might define a research agenda, produce publications and seek external funding; it might enhance curricular development in departments and programs (including the College Seminar Program) that is consonant with the mission of the center; it might advise students--both undergraduate and graduate--who wish to pursue related independent majors, double majors, minors, or research programs; it might direct students to relevant internship opportunities. The centers are intended to strengthen existing departments and programs, not compete with them. They will open doors between departments and schools with graduate programs and those without; they will connect further the intellectual experiences of undergraduates with those of graduate students; they will foster collaboration with colleagues at Haverford, Swarthmore, and the University of Pennsylvania. Most important, each center will coordinate the activities of the various departments and offices on campus whose work might effectively contribute to advancing its goals. By adding fresh interest and vitality to programs at all levels, the centers will enhance our ability to recruit the best students.

Faculty groups have proposed four centers to date, and their proposals have been discussed and preliminarily endorsed by the Committee on Academic Priorities. In each of the brief descriptions that follow, we resisted the temptation to specify the programs and departments that might participate, as we would risk being inadvertently exclusive while describing an initiative that seeks to foster inclusive collaboration. A computer scientist, for example, could have a lot to say about visual culture, a philosopher about the ethics of global politics, or a literary critic about environmental imperatives.

- The **Center for International Studies** will bring together the social sciences and humanities, particularly the modern language departments, in new ways to address the changing career objectives and research and teaching interests of students and faculty. The Center will serve as a forum for defining global issues and confronting them in their appropriate social, scientific, cultural, and linguistic contexts. Topics of particular interest might include transnational migration, environmental issues, ethnic relations within nations previously defining themselves as homogeneous, human rights issues, nongovernmental organizations, international security arrangements, changing states and political control, development and social justice issues, and trade and investment agreements. The Center's multidisciplinary cluster will give an intellectual locus to various ongoing and complementary intellectual enterprises that we want to make more productively interactive. The Center will give us an opportunity to bring to campus for brief or extended visits scholars and professionals in fields

such as international business, law, diplomacy, and public health. It will also support student internships in the international arena and enhance recruitment efforts both at home and abroad.

- The **Center for Ethnicities, Communities, and Social Policy** will bring together the expertise of social scientists and humanists from Arts and Sciences and from the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research to explore diverse communities in the United States and to examine questions of social policy. Some of the issues the Center might address are: the nature of immigration in different regions and historical periods, similarities and differences in ethnic experiences, the impact of social and economic discrimination on particular communities, conflict and cooperation among ethnic communities, the role of government policy in areas such as employment and housing, and the formation and expression of cultural and national/transnational identities. Drawing on the College's proximity to Philadelphia and neighboring cities, the Center will promote exchanges among academics, policymakers, and other professionals and provide opportunities for faculty and students to engage in field research and experiential learning. In addition to promoting cooperation among departments and programs, the Center, through its outreach efforts, will provide a vehicle for exchange between the College and the wider community.
- The **Center for Visual Culture** will foster the study of visual forms and experience at all levels of the curriculum. It will engage scholars and students in explorations of the visual aspect of the natural world and the myriad objects and processes of human invention, and will address traditions of self-conscious critical interpretation of these phenomena. The Center's scope embraces domains ranging from painting, sculpture, and architecture to film, video, television, and digital media, and from urban, museum, and industrial design to theater, dance, and public ceremony. Its interest resides in its breadth and in its multidisciplinary approach to visual culture from the most ancient artifact to the contemporary film. The Center will promote interaction among scholars and practitioners, and will be a bridge to Philadelphia's museums, galleries, and theaters.
- The **Center for Science in Society** will catalyze and support explorations of the many ways in which people seek to understand the natural world and to use that understanding to support its continued vitality as well as that of human society. The Center will investigate connections between scientific methods of inquiry and humanistic ones, and will bring together the academic and the applied. It will foster hands-on, exploratory and transdisciplinary approaches to teaching and research. Through student internships and visiting fellowships, the Center will facilitate the integration of academic learning with scientific understanding in workplace and policy settings. The Center will support existing interdepartmental programs and facilitate new collaborations among faculty, staff, and students from the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

Though their planning is still in its earliest stages, it is already clear that these four centers offer a particularly compelling agenda for Bryn Mawr. Each builds on existing strengths, each speaks to genuine faculty and student interest, and each actively advances the objectives upon which we choose to concentrate our energies in the coming decade.

Building the Bryn Mawr of the Future

The College's ability to achieve its educational mission depends fundamentally on the people who constitute its day-to-day community--students, faculty, and staff--and on the extended network of alumnae/i connected to that community and each other.

1. Students.

Bryn Mawr must continue to enroll and retain the most highly qualified and motivated students at all levels. To accomplish this goal, we must appreciably expand our pool of applicants, for it is the continuing quality of our students--their ability, diversity, intellectual curiosity, and character--that defines the culture of learning and the tradition of achievement which distinguish Bryn Mawr. In particular, this plan lays out an agenda of academic renewal designed to attract the most talented women to our undergraduate programs, be they of traditional or nontraditional (through our Katharine E. McBride Scholars Program) college age. But in an ever more intense competition for liberal arts college enrollments, we must do more.

- The College must find new ways to speak proudly and persuasively to potential students, and to enhance the visibility of Bryn Mawr in the public eye. Our marketing, public relations, and public information initiatives, be they as contemporary as a web site or as traditional as a printed catalogue, should neither misrepresent who we are nor redefine radically what we do in response to market trends. Rather they should seek to position Bryn Mawr positively in relation to our competitors. We are persuaded that we currently offer a highly "marketable" program, and we will strive to enhance that program's appeal when such strategies are consonant with our mission. We must seek professional advice of the highest quality in ensuring that our message reaches the appropriate audiences.
- We must increase support for financial aid at the undergraduate and graduate levels if we are to continue to enroll diverse and genuinely talented classes in the twenty-first century. The College's enrollment management group must continue to assess the strategies we use in financial aid packaging.
- Bryn Mawr must continue to focus on innovation within the curriculum of the first two years. The College Seminar Program provides a valuable common experience to incoming students and will require expanded institutional and faculty commitment to adequate levels of staffing and support. We must ensure

that our required coursework effectively develops each student's written, spoken, and quantitative skills.

- Bryn Mawr must extend possibilities for service learning, internships, and undergraduate research. One of the hallmarks of a Bryn Mawr education has been the opportunity for students to "get their hands dirty" by doing research, whether in the laboratory, the field, or the archive. Growing numbers of students now seek to expand that experience to include applications of their studies to the world beyond the campus: in community service, in career exploration, in observing and assisting in schools, and in international venues. To meet this expectation, we must seek ways of integrating such experience in a wide range of academic and co-curricular programs. We must provide additional funding and professional staff to support this initiative.
- Bryn Mawr must also sustain and enhance the quality of student life at the College well beyond the academic core. The quality of our residential and dining programs is excellent. By way of such essentials as food and shelter, Bryn Mawr students are as well served as any in the nation. Students also acknowledge the importance of the residentially based student community to their personal and intellectual growth. Self-governance, the hall adviser and customs programs, and the class-integrated character of the halls foster increasing maturity, cultural exchange, and enduring ties of friendship and collective identity. Some other aspects of student life, however, require continued or increased attention from the College:

Making Campus Diversity Work. Bryn Mawr can be justifiably pleased with its success in recruiting a diverse and pluralistic student body, but neither the institution nor the individual members of the College community stand apart from the tensions of the larger society to which we belong. The College will need to reaffirm regularly its responsibility to this aspect of its mission, to enhance its efforts in recruitment and retention, and to ensure that all members of the community are encouraged to express their opinions. The proposed Center for Ethnicities, Communities and Social Policy will increase students' opportunities to learn about and discuss a range of critical issues. Bryn Mawr has also designated space for a Multicultural Center to house offices for student cultural groups, a meeting room and lecture space, and possibly a gallery or display area. The College will consider how best to support programs within this space, and may well want to direct additional funds to the Office of Institutional Diversity, the Office of Student Activities, or to the student groups themselves. The variety of student religious groups deserve better facilities than are currently available to them in Erdman, and the College should seek funding to adapt another space to serve as a non-denominational center for religious and spiritual life.

Expanding Opportunities in Athletics. Women are participating in athletics as never before; they are preparing for lives that will be active physically as well as intellectually. Bryn Mawr's athletics program calls for an increasing commitment from the College. In the wake of Title IX, which requires equal institutional funding for men's and women's athletics, students coming to the College have had far greater opportunities to participate in sports than their predecessors. We will need to meet the expectations these students bring to intercollegiate and club athletics if we are to continue to attract many of our most disciplined and accomplished applicants. The new Director of Athletics has identified several immediate priorities in this regard, including enhanced support for our competitive intercollegiate program, for our physical education and wellness courses, for general recreation, and for outdoor activities. Through its commitment to thoughtful programming, to adequate and talented staffing, and to enhanced facilities (including an improved fitness center), the Department of Athletics and Physical Education will help foster a healthy and balanced extra-curricular campus life and support the well being of the full community.

Enhancing Social and Cultural Life. The College must do more to foster a balance of hard work and good fun in our students' lives. We must sustain and publicize a lively program of social and cultural events on campus. These should include formal activities (dances, lectures, plays, films, and celebrations) as well as informal ones. The College may well need to consider how to restructure or add to an area that, for the most part, has been decentralized and left in the hands of student groups and academic departments. Bryn Mawr must also make a commitment to increasing the visibility of the arts in the life of the community and to improving the adequacy of performing arts spaces and galleries.

2. Faculty.

The success of Bryn Mawr's academic programs, and thus our ability to recruit and retain the best students, depends on the presence of a faculty of teacher-scholars of the first rank.

- Given the demands of college teaching in terms of both course load and attention to students, we must ensure the scholarly vitality of our faculty through additional research support and through an enhanced sabbatical policy at least equal to that of our peer institutions. Sabbatical costs are generated through the need to replace faculty on leave. Therefore, we will seek: 1) to reduce replacement costs through careful departmental review of the necessity for, and the rotation of, current curricular offerings; 2) to realize economies in course offerings (particularly at the upper level) through closer collaboration with Haverford; and 3) to raise funds to endow a limited number of additional faculty positions for the purpose of leave replacement. We will also investigate the possibility of a "flexible" sabbatical program since research patterns differ among the disciplines.

- With a student to faculty ratio among the best in the nation, it is clear that we need not significantly expand the overall size of the faculty except as required to provide the additional leave replacements described above. We should, however, also examine the current ratio of part-time and adjunct FTE to full-time and tenure-track FTE, with an eye to converting some positions to permanent (and thus more expensive) status. Here we need to strike a proper balance between flexibility and continuity. We must also do some limited hiring in anticipation of retirement so as to ensure that the influx of new faculty into the College progresses at a steady pace and that faculty diversity increases.
- The CAP report of April 27, 1999 proposes at least two searches in fields critical to advancing the Plan: the first in the history and criticism of the arts of film, video and interactive media; and the second in Asian American studies. These searches should be authorized as soon as funding is located.
- Our Middle States evaluation team observed that “faculty salaries remain an appropriate high priority in the college budget.” We must persist in our commitment to raise faculty salaries to competitive levels, at least achieving the middle range in our comparison group.

3. Staff.

The quality of all operations at Bryn Mawr, including the implementation of our ambitious academic agenda, depends on staff commitment, involvement, and productivity. We must be sure that all staff members feel that their participation is central to the College’s mission and that their hard work is appreciated. We must persist in our efforts to enhance staff diversity and to foster a working environment grounded in principles of fairness and mutual respect. We must ensure that staffing levels are adequate to the tasks at hand. As a community, we must be vigilant in our commitment to communicate with one another across all levels, openly and honestly. We must find better and more effective ways to encourage and reward teamwork, innovation, productivity, and excellent service. We must enhance effective job and skill training and strive to keep salaries and benefits competitive. With new leadership in Human Resources, we will articulate a comprehensive management philosophy and work to enact its principles in the daily operations of the College. We will also clarify and simplify College policy and practice.

4. Alumnae/i.

The College’s living legacy is embodied in our twentieth-century graduates. Their records of achievement and their commitment to Bryn Mawr will help us realize twenty-first century goals. Bryn Mawr’s alumnae/i play a number of vital roles in the life of the College. They provide guidance and direction to the institution as members of its Board of Trustees. They are the College’s strongest champions and give generously of their time, money, energy, and expertise as volunteers and supporters. They serve as mentors, friends, colleagues, and role models for Bryn Mawr students and other alumnae/i. The College and the Alumnae Association must continue to foster these alumnae/i

connections within the Bryn Mawr community. The advent of the internet offers opportunities to communicate in innovative ways with Bryn Mawr “in dispersion,” and we must take full advantage of this technological wonder. Alumnae/i will be important partners for a number of the initiatives proposed in this plan, including the expansion of internship and international opportunities for students. The College must also be attentive to the needs and interests of alumnae/i themselves, and supportive of the results of the Alumnae Association’s current strategic planning.

Conclusion

Bryn Mawr is emerging from an era of fiscal austerity that limited the range of the College’s opportunities during a period of institutional transition. Despite being half the size--or less--of most comparable undergraduate institutions, the College sustained graduate programs in social work and social research and in all disciplines of the arts and sciences in which the College offered instruction at the undergraduate level. Some of these achieved a measure of excellence equivalent to that achieved by programs at the greatest--and largest--universities in the world. This model gave the College a distinctive identity and character, but one that became impossible to sustain. In the 1980’s, as a consequence of financial restrictions and of change in the world of American higher education, Bryn Mawr eliminated a number of graduate programs in the Arts and Sciences and required that the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research become essentially self-supporting. These decisions, traumatic as they were (and are) to many in the Bryn Mawr community, allowed the College to preserve many of its traditional strengths and to return to a hard won financial stability.

The College now has entered an era of fiscal responsibility that demands that we not only attend to the limitations imposed by our size, but also seek innovative ways to sustain and transform ourselves. The support of our loyal alumnae/i and friends will be critical. We emerge at the beginning of the twenty-first century fully capable of addressing the challenges we will face. In an age that favors narrowly preprofessional undergraduate education, we must be staunch and visible defenders of the liberal arts, not only as an ideal but also as a highly practical educational model. We must compete effectively against other institutions of higher learning that are both larger and wealthier than Bryn Mawr for the best undergraduate and graduate applicants. We must maintain, to the extent possible, our commitment to need-based financial aid. We must support faculty, programs, and facilities appropriate to high quality undergraduate and graduate education on a limited base of tuition-paying undergraduates. We must sustain some of the vital, but often expensive, programs that are central to the College’s reputation and self-definition while we also find the resources and energy to diversify and modernize the curriculum. To accomplish these goals, we must transform our culture of studied modesty into one that accepts the need to be more forthright in acclaiming, in honest and appropriate ways, our achievements, and in stating our needs. And, most important, we must acknowledge the changing ambitions of young women and thus encourage a heightened responsiveness to the world in which the College now exists and competes.

With bold and creative vision, with the energy of a dedicated community, and with the support of generous benefactors, Bryn Mawr will offer in the twenty-first century an education that is second to none.

**Endorsed by a unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees of Bryn Mawr College
March 4, 2000**

*Note: A long-range facilities plan has already been approved by the Board, and the next capital campaign will include a major facilities component. Our most immediate projects will be the renovation of Bettws-y-Coed, Dalton and Thomas. Our goal will be to cluster related departments in the social sciences and the humanities in markedly improved office and instructional space. A renovation of the first floor of Canaday Library will produce much-needed academic support space as well as additional space for the Arts Program; an addition to the gymnasium will relieve significant space constraints currently affecting programming and recruitment. The refinement and modification of the existing facilities plan will be tailored to the initiatives described above.