

Sterling College

Working Hands. Working Minds.

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUTUMN 2017

SCHEDULE & AGENDA

Friday, October 13, 2017

12:00 p.m.	Luncheon	Dunbar Hall
1:00 - 2:15 p.m.	Session I	Mager Hall
	Finance Committee	Aldo Leopold Room
	Trusteeship Committee	Rachel Carson Room
2:30 - 3:45 p.m.	Session II	Mager Hall
	Advancement Committee	Aldo Leopold Room
	Buildings & Grounds Committee	Rachel Carson Room
4:00 - 5:15 p.m.	Session III	Mager Hall
	Enrollment Committee	Aldo Leopold Room
	Program Committee	Rachel Carson Room
5:30 p.m.	Community Supper	Dunbar Hall
6:30 p.m.	Trustee Social & Program	Simpson Hall
	Update on The Wendell Berry Farming Program of Sterling College followed by a screening of "Look & See: A Portrait of Wendell Berry" (<i>film</i>)	

Saturday, October 14, 2017

8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Simpson Hall
9:00 a.m.	Welcome from the Chair	
	President's Message	
9:30 a.m.	Audit Committee Report	
	Fiscal Year 2017 Audit Review (<i>vote</i>)	

Treasurer's Report
Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Review *(vote)*

10:15 a.m.	Break	
10:30 a.m.	Fifteen Minute Committee Chair Reports & Discussion Enrollment Advancement Trusteeship <i>(vote)</i> Program	
11:30 a.m.	Campus Improvements Tour	
12:00 pm	Lunch	Dunbar Hall
12:45 p.m.	Refreshments	Simpson Hall
1:00 p.m.	Dialogue Session Higher Education & Surviving the Future	
1:45 p.m.	Break	
2:00 p.m.	Executive Session	
3:00 p.m.	Meeting Evaluation	
3:15 p.m.	Adjourn	



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

One of the skills a college president most needs is the ability to discern the difference between an approaching storm of threatening proportions and the sort of storms that fit neatly into a teacup. The ability to tell the difference is a skill one can only acquire with experience and a commitment to continuity.

As I begin my sixth year of service, I have only recently begun to feel more confident in my meteorological skill set. With a few years behind me, I have also become aware that there are three storm types that seem to preoccupy me. The first is the external storm that buffets the College from the outside. The second, is the storm that brews up from within, and often catches us by surprise. The third are those storms which I, by intent or mistake, create myself. Each storm type can fit within a teacup, but all seemingly have to be assessed, on the off chance, that they might actually evolve into a gale.

Last month I again met with a group of fellow meteorologists, the presidents of America's smallest liberal arts colleges, convened by The Endeavor Foundation. It was as evident that the storm facing our model of higher education is raging. With support from the Foundation we have been given funding to investigate methodologies for institutional discounting and pricing. As you will read in our enrollment report, Sterling's exposure on this issue is significant. As a member of this group we will be looking closely, not only at how we operationally support our missions and provide access to students, but also at the feasibility of tuition-resetting for member colleges. This research will be an important tool for our Finance & Investment Committee when it meets in January to set the 2018-19 tuition and fees.

While participating in this dialogue is important for Sterling, it is also essential that we, by our own means, and our own strategic planning vision, prepare for external storms. In particular, I see the continued growth of The School of the New American Farmstead (SNAF) and the launch of The Wendell Berry Farming Program as the best mission-focused means, not only of weathering the storm, but in making significant contributions to addressing the critical issues facing the environment, agriculture, rural communities, and education today. On Friday evening we will spend some time discussing the development of our partnership with The Berry Center.

Another example of our effort to assess the storms around us will be a two-day public talk and symposium held on campus starting on Friday, December 1. This event will focus on the work of the late David Fleming, author of *Lean Logic* and *Surviving the Future*. I will be speaking along with trustee Margo Baldwin and three others, including Peter Buffett, who is the president of the NoVo Foundation, which funded this event. For those who are unfamiliar with David's work, it informs our understanding of how humanity, and specifically to our end, education, can respond in the aftermath of the collapse of today's carbon-based market economy.

While external storms are important to monitor, some storms come within. It is with deep gratitude for the vision and hard work of Favor Ellis, our Dean of Community, that I inform the board that this, her sixth year, will be her final year at Sterling. I am deeply grateful for her commitment to Sterling and for giving

the College a full year in which to search for our next dean. When Carol Dickson agreed to become Dean of Academics, she told me that she would willingly serve for two years. This year, Carol will complete her fourth before returning to the faculty in June. She has been a steadfast colleague and advocate for the curriculum and faculty. I will be able to tell you more about our next steps in appointing a new academic leader at our meeting. With both of these transitions, I am confident that Sterling will appoint candidates who share similar levels of passion and skill to those Favor and Carol have brought to their work.

Transitions are tricky because they make weather prediction more challenging for a president, particularly when that transition involves the Board of Trustees. My relationship with the board is one of the most gratifying aspects of my work. You are, after all, in the storm assessment and prediction business with me. I am deeply grateful for the service of our newly appointed chair, Pete Chehayl and the entire board, long serving and recently elected alike. Your relationships with each other, the trust you exhibit in each other, the thoughtfulness with which you discharge your fiduciary duties, and your passion for the mission is the bulwark against which any storm, gale or teacup sized, ultimately hurls itself.

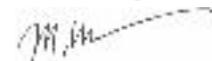
The financial health of Sterling College continues to strengthen. Among all of the weather predictions, this is the one on which this board and all of the presidents who have served it have spent the most time. You will find in your board materials a new presentation of our financials that adhere to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). You will also find a five year comparative statement that will help you see the important trends. These statements underscore the conservative nature of our budget planning, the challenge of the financial aid discount rate, and the extraordinary success of our fundraising efforts. Bill White has continued to do exceptional work in reporting and managing not only the finances, but the daily operations of the College.

With Bill beginning to absorb some of my operational responsibilities, I have been able to devote more time to that third type of storm, the type I generate. Whether they be teacup or a gale sized often has to do with the time I can spend on an idea or change. This semester I am working closely with Carol and the Academic Council to continue to work on the ideas found in the "(Re)Evolution" memorandum that I shared with you last spring. In April, the Program Committee will report to the full board on our progress. Similarly, I am working closely with Beana Bern as she leads the effort to articulate a comprehensive recruitment plan for the entire Sterling "ecosystem" from the College, to SNAF, and soon, The Wendell Berry Farming Program.

Lately, I have been giving thought to how all types of storms, large ones such as those brewing outside our cup, like the challenges facing all liberal arts colleges, as well as smaller storms inside our cup, like transitions in leadership among cherished colleagues, might ultimately contribute to strengthening us. It isn't as simple as wishing storms away, like conflict, they can be either or both constructive and/or destructive. My capacity to tell the difference, to make the most of the storms as they present themselves, is surely strengthened by the health and leadership of this board.

I thank you for your commitment and faith in Sterling College and in me.

Sincere regards,



Matthew Derr
President

ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

It is with gratitude that we report 1,119 unique donors have given 3,537 gifts contributing \$9.5 million toward the *Nourish the Roots Campaign* since it began in Fiscal Year 2014. Undoubtedly, with the support of this committee, Sterling will exceed the board approved \$10 million goal for the campaign at the end of the current fiscal year.

The budgeted goal for this fiscal year is to raise a further \$1.2 million for the campaign before it concludes on June 30, 2018. If we are successful, this will be the fourth consecutive year in which Sterling has raised \$1 million or more in unrestricted funds for operations. The College will exceed its \$5 million campaign goal by \$1.1 million. This accomplishment is tempered by the fact that we will likely fail to meet our \$3 million capital giving goal by approximately the same amount.

Within this year's budget, you will also see that the College has set a prudently revised goal of \$200,000 for capital giving. However, it remains our goal to raise an additional \$800,000 in capital support for the projects identified in our long range plan. We have added external consultative grant writing support to further this year's capital campaign effort.

Campaign Report - Gifts & Pledges as of October 5, 2017

	Fiscal Year 2014	Fiscal Year 2015	Fiscal Year 2016	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Total
Annual Giving	\$747,124	\$1,794,808	\$1,099,994	\$1,331,721	\$171,182	\$5,144,829
Capital Giving	\$1,003,169	\$294,784	\$275,905	\$362,842	\$30	\$1,936,730
Planned Giving	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,317,300	\$35,250	\$0	\$2,352,550
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$93,650	\$0	\$93,650
Total	\$1,750,293	\$3,089,592	\$2,693,199	\$1,823,463	\$171,212	\$9,527,759
Donors	623	561	580	555	40	

In the view of the advancement staff, the upcoming, as yet unnamed campaign, likely to be launched in 2020, with the board's approval, will focus on endowment. With this in mind, for strategic reasons, we have elected to not set a "planned giving" goal for the current fiscal year, as we proposed at our Summer Meeting. The number of commitments made to our planned giving goal for the *Nourish the Roots Campaign* has been disappointing, although the estate plans that have been shared with the College exceeded our campaign goal. This is an area of need for greater planning for the College and one that is not *immediately* as high a priority for the small staff as annual and capital giving. This will soon change.

It is our hope this year, Sterling's 60th and the final year of the campaign, that we can increase this year's participation in the campaign by 75% to 750 unique donors, and to grow the overall unique donor participation in the campaign to 1,300. With the leadership of our new Advancement and Alumni Relations Officer, Jacob Trumbull, I believe this outcome is achievable and would go a long way toward reaching our other important fundraising goals for the year.

Fundraising Report - Year to Date Giving between July 1, 2017 and October 6, 2017.

Fiscal Year Giving	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018
Sterling Fund	\$201,709	\$251,182
Capital Giving	\$10,040	\$30
Planned Giving	\$5,000	\$0
NoVo Foundation	\$0	\$93,650
Total Gifts	\$216,749	\$344,862

Donor Category	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018
Alumni	9	9
Board of Trustees	5	3
Businesses/Orgs.	1	3
Employees/Students	4	6
Families	4	5
Foundations	2	2
Friends/Individuals	17	12
Government	0	0
Past Trustees	3	2
Total Gifts	45	42

Advancement Committee Agenda

Friday, October 13, 2017

2:30-3:45 p.m.

Mager Hall - Aldo Leopold Room

1. Chair's Welcome
2. Q&A Regarding Committee Report (15 minutes)
3. Brief Overview of Changes in Staffing (5 minutes)
4. Update on The Berry Center Fundraising Collaboration (10 minutes)
5. Review of Annual Fund Appeal Letter (15 minutes)
6. Discussion about Capital Campaign Goal (30 minutes)

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT

In the eyes of many Craftsbury residents, the Sterling College campus has never looked better. While we have much still to do, the entire community recognizes the work of our buildings and grounds crew, Kelly Jones and his team, Steve Smith, Noreen Kelly, and Adam Rice, for their commitment to Sterling and its students. They do extraordinary work on campus everyday. We want to highlight a few initiatives and will then highlight a host of recently completed and ongoing projects.

The acquisition of the "IA Building" from Craftsbury Academy has been completed and it is now an asset on our books. We are in the midst of planning, and about to be undertaking, the renovation of the soon-to-be-named "Center for Rural Arts". The first priority is exterior improvements for integrity from the elements as well as for appearance, including windows, clapboards, drainage, and roof work. Our concurrent focus is on readying the instructional space for classes like "Reverence for Wood" in time for late January. This gives us the very real benefit of securing Paradise Hall from use with its known issues. This project has, thus far, been funded through gifts to the College.

If you have not had an opportunity to see the renovation of our Simpson I and Simpson III classrooms, please do so. In particular, Simpson III, soon to be renamed The 1958 Room, has already proven valuable with its use during "Sense of Place" for our new students and during long block this fall. Many thanks to the donor who generously donated the funds for the project. We will continue with renovations to Simpson Hall as we look to create greatly improved classroom space on the second floor.

We have completed installation of new windows in Madison House, with positive reviews from our students. Next on our list is renovation of the bath and shower rooms. We also expect to move the growing operation for our farm out of the Madison basement which will greatly improve humidity and air quality. The sources of funding for this project has been through operations.

The farm and garden is one area where improved financial liquidity lets us get ahead, and provides the funds for smart projects with a quick return on investment. You will see three projects in the updated project outline below that should pay for themselves within one year in savings and efficiency while providing even more Sterling produce for our kitchen. We are centralizing our growing operations which currently occur in several different sites.

The following is an updated project outline for Fiscal Year 2018:

Brown Library	Exterior paint and walkway repair (complete).
Cedar Cottage	Septic, furnace, paint and repair (underway).
Dunbar Hall	Windows, entrance, and fire door (underway).
Fiber House	Upgrade and renovate into residential use (planning stage).
Kane Hall	Repairs to roof, doors, and floor repair (planned).
Madison House	Windows, bathroom renovations, painting (underway).
Mager Hall & Merlin House	Exterior, walkway, and drainage (underway).
Parking & Pathways	Resurface parking and culverts (underway).
Rian Fried Center	Washhouse cooler, greenhouse renovation, and relocation (underway).
Simpson Hall Room III	Paint, flooring, windows, fittings, and furnishings (completed).
Simpson Hall Room I	Paint, flooring, fittings, and furnishings (completed).
Simpson Hall Second Floor	Paint, flooring, fittings, and furnishings (planning stage).

Building & Grounds Committee Agenda

Friday, October 13, 2017

2:30 - 3:45 p.m.

Mager Hall - Rachel Carson Room

- 1. Chair's Welcome*
- 2. Q&A Regarding Building & Grounds Report (15 minutes)*
- 3. Report on John Feinberg's visit to campus (15 minutes)*
- 4. Review and discussion of a prioritized list of capital projects (45 minutes)*

ENROLLMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

The College began Fall Semester with 132 billable students - 81 matriculated students and 51 new students, with a further 10 students on official leave of absence, for a total enrollment headcount of 143.

Also of note, 8 of the 132 students are taking part in a semester long program in the Sierras, our first fall semester program for many years. Each year a few students leave at the beginning of the semester. This year is no exception; as of this report, there are 128 billable students enrolled.

Although the College enjoyed its largest enrollment in sixty years, it missed the goal of 65 new students by 12. Interestingly, if the College had not run a semester off-campus program this fall, when combined with a larger returning population than anticipated and more students seeking to live on campus than in past years, had the entering class been even a few students larger, we would have needed to increase campus housing. This is a capital cost we are presently seeking to avoid.

This year’s institutional discount rate is, based on the enrollment of 128 billable students, 64.21%, calculated using the National Association of College Business Officers methodology. This is steady from last year and, in the face of stiff competition from peer institutions with “empty beds,” it is difficult to foresee how we can reduce the discount rate. However, every strategic attempt made to expand the pool of applicants is intended to support our efforts to control the discount rate in the face of instability in the higher education landscape.

Enrollment Management is looking carefully at what worked and what didn’t from the past year and will be making some large and small-scale adjustments to both process and strategy for the year ahead. We’re planning to recruit a class of 12-15 students for Spring 2018, to fill the School of the New American Farmstead (SNAF) courses to capacity, to lay groundwork to have a successful kick-off of the Wendell Berry Farming Program in the fall of 2019 and, most importantly, we remain laser-focused on a Fall 2018 enrollment goal of 65.

Final Comparative Enrollment Results 2016 and 2017

Recruitment Funnel	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Difference
Unsolicited Inquiries	830	885	+55
Applications	111 (13%)	112 (13%)	+1
Admitted	109 (98%)	104 (93%)	-5
Denied	3 (3%)	7 (6%)	+4
Enrolled	54 (50%)	52 (50%)	-2

Inquiries grew slightly last year, though not as much as planned, anticipated, or needed. Our conversion rate of unsolicited inquiries to application compares favorably with other institutions, therefore the growth of the inquiry pool is seen as a critical area of focus for our efforts in the coming year. The increase in ‘applications started’ is attributable to a system upgrade. This new feature gives applicants the ability to start an application and return to it later, rather than requiring finishing the application in one action.

Our recruitment communication plans focused on yielding applicants from inquiries may have been put in place too late in the last cycle to be effective and, as they are in place and optimized now, we hope they will provide more structure and visibility into their conversion for Spring and Fall 2018.

Comparative Results Year to Date Fall 2016 through Fall 2018 - October 2, 2017

Recruitment Funnel	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018
Inquiries	450	383	861
Applicants	9 (%)	2 (%)	1 (%)
Admitted	0 (%)	0 (%)	0 (%)
Denied	0 (%)	0 (%)	0 (%)
Enrolled	0 (%)	0 (%)	0 (%)

The data above might beg the question, “Why do we have significantly more inquiries now than this time in the last two cycles?” The answer is that we have been engaging with a micro-scholarship college portal named “Raise.Me” for over a year now and have found that the leads we receive from them each month are already qualified “hand raisers” who have proactively chosen to engage with Sterling College. In the past we counted these as solicited (purchased) inquiries and waited for them to interact with Admission in some way before moving them through the funnel to recruits. In this cycle we’ve made the decision to import these specific leads as recruits from the start, skipping the prospect portion of our funnel, which changes our engagement level with them substantially. This change increases the number of recruits that each counselor is working with much earlier in the cycle. This strategic shift along with some other adjustments and approaches will aid in meeting this year’s objectives.

It is time for us to review and renew our strategic recruitment plan. The exciting additions of SNAF and The Wendell Berry Farming Program have dramatically changed the programmatic ecosystem of Sterling College and substantially increased the opportunity, scope, and also the complexity of our enrollment and marketing requirements. The strategic plan and accompanying implementation steps are in process now and will continue to get honed as details of The Berry Center partnership are clarified and the 2018 programming of SNAF is revealed.

From establishing a clear brand architecture for the three programs to detailed enrollment objectives and target demographics per program, these documents will serve to guide our efforts in the months and years ahead and ensure that we are staying focused on our key priorities.

Enrollment Committee Agenda

Friday, October 13, 2017

4:00 - 5:15 p.m.

Mager Hall - Aldo Leopold Room

1. Chair’s Welcome
2. Q&A about the Enrollment Committee Report (20 minutes)
3. Brief Overview of Changes in Staffing and Enrollment Reporting (10 minutes)
4. Discussion of Brand Architecture: Sterling, SNAF, WBFP, and Field School (45 minutes)

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The College's statement of financial position (balance sheet) showed a positive increase in Fiscal Year 2017 after a downward move in Fiscal Year 2016, with assets of \$5,562,679 and total net assets at \$3,181,520 as of June 30, 2017. The Finance Committee's addenda to this report includes a five year comparative report on the College's financial position.

Our statement of activities and changes in net assets (income statement) showed similar positive traction. Student tuition and fees continued a five-year trend of growth. The impact of the School of the New American Farmstead (SNAF) is evident as well. Auxiliary income was reduced from Fiscal Year 2014 to Fiscal Year 2015 levels, but has increased now in each of the last two years. SNAF has proven to be revenue positive in it's own right as well as contributing to increased summer enrollment by matriculated students.

We stabilized our operating expenses with a modest decrease after a challenging Fiscal Year 2016. You will note a decrease in instructional expenses and in an increase in institutional support. That represents a choice in Fiscal Year 2017 and going forward to cease allocating some costs by department such as copier costs and utility costs so that we can better evaluate each cost center on it's core competency and function. The Fiscal Year 2017 surplus is estimated, pre-audit, at \$559,000. It has helped us overcome the \$334,000 deficit sustained last year and contribute to the liquidity that has allowed us to spend money on items that will bring us a return on investment in the near future.

Sterling is structurally solid. It's one thing to overcome a bad year. Doing so in a way that exceeds even a prior "good" year, in this case Fiscal Year 2015, is that much more telling with regard to our health. We remain small and as such will remain vulnerable. Awareness of that vulnerability informs our cash management and our budgeting.

Sterling ended Fiscal Year 2017 with a strong cash position. The strength of SNAF programming and strong participation in our summer programs allowed us to operate without using our line of credit until late July. It has since been paid off. Success begets success, particularly with cash flow. It is allowing us for the first time to begin to fund some of our deferred maintenance from operating funds - for example, installation of new windows in Madison House. We are utilizing a predictive cash flow model to assist in planning through the end of Fiscal Year 2018. Maintaining our cash position is a very high priority.

The Fiscal Year 2018 budget process began in the spring. The Finance Committee's addenda to this report includes a Fiscal Year 2018 Statement of Activities. As we concluded Fiscal Year 2017 and began to compare our early budgeting with actual results, some adjustments were made but the early projections were largely accurate. As mentioned at our July meeting, we used a very conservative projection on both the number of enrollees for the fall and the mix of on and off campus, full and part time. Those conservative projections were borne out, coming in very close to the cash flow projected from our final Fiscal Year 2017 enrollment.

We have also been conservative in a line by line review of cost centers for the Fiscal Year 2018 budget, adding and taking away to reflect recent history and our evolving program requirements. Fiscal Year 2017 featured outstanding results in fundraising, including accelerated pledges, leading to the aforementioned surplus of \$559,000. Our goal for Fiscal Year 2018 projects a \$280,000 surplus, including achieving a goal of \$1,000,000 in fundraising. That leaves the College with "room to breath" on the expense side without having to rely on fundraising to fill in the gaps.

The College is experiencing value from our improved reporting. We are now able to produce cost-center by cost-center income statements to analyze year to date numbers. Two months is a small snapshot but we are on track in comparison to the draft budget, without significant outliers. What it has highlighted is the imperative of timely data entry. We can now generate very current reporting but we need to stay on top of entries to do so.

We are at the end of a very time intensive project. We are now able to present reporting, as often as a monthly basis, using Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) format, that will match the reporting produced by our accounting firm and provide consistency in reporting to our partners like Union Bank. Our general ledger platform, Financial Edge, and our fundraising platform, Raiser's Edge, are now integrated. That integration is reducing data entry, opportunity for error and access to timely and useful reporting.

The "composite scores" is computed by the Department of Education as means for them to compare the financial health of disparate schools. As discussed previously, our score was just below the 1.5 minimum and we are appealing because we believe that the presentation of our financials, not simply the results, prejudiced this outcome. We have not had an update from the Department of Education on that appeal as of yet that we can share with the board. Our estimate for our composite score for Fiscal Year 2017 is approximately 2.1, comfortably above the desirable standard of 1.5 or above.

The College conducted a review of our roster of employees to ascertain whether exempt (salaried) employees truly should be exempt or would more appropriately be non-exempt (hourly). After review with counsel, we determined that 8 staff members will be moved to non-exempt status. We want to remain committed as an institution to maintaining compliance with the law in all matters and we want to be proactive in doing so.

Effective in November, we will be processing payroll every other week instead of twice a month. This is a positive change all around but in particular, it will help Sterling even further to stay in compliance with wage and hour regulations as well as spreading out cash flow to meet payroll each period. Increasing the number of hourly employees makes it an even bigger priority to have clarity around what constitutes our pay periods.

We discussed at our last meeting that a number of eligible staff were not yet enrolled in our retirement plan. At this point, all but two eligible employees have been enrolled. The two remaining employees have been made aware in writing that this benefit is available to them and encouraged to sign up.

Finance Committee Agenda

Friday, October 13, 2017

1:00 - 2:15 p.m.

Mager Hall - Aldo Leopold Room

- 1. Chair's Welcome*
- 2. Q&A about the Enrollment Committee Report (15 minutes)*
- 3. Audit Committee Report (15 minutes)*
- 4. Fiscal Year 2018 Budget (20 minutes)*
- 5. Discussion of the GAAP Dashboard (25 minutes)*

PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORT

The recent Community Days, the days between the intensive and the long-block sessions dedicated to special programming and between-session meetings, were particularly vibrant this fall. We welcomed Bennett Konesni and Edith Gawler, who led participants (students, staff, and community members) in an afternoon of learning work songs, which they sang while accomplishing some much-needed tasks in the garden. We also hosted scholar, writer, and professor Carolyn Finney (author of *Black Faces, White Spaces*), who gave a public talk, met with faculty, the Roots group, and the Racial Justice Task Force, and attended a handful of classes.

The new semester brings new opportunities for students and faculty alike. We are thrilled with the summer's announcement of Sterling's partnership with The Berry Center and look forward to seeing that program come to fruition. We have also partnered with Kroka Expeditions of New Hampshire, which means that students in Kroka's fall semester program in Ecuador (mostly high school seniors and "gap year" students) may enroll in that program for Sterling credit. The renovations in Simpson Hall greatly enhance the learning environment in those classrooms, and provide a significantly improved event space. With Sterling's purchase of the former Industrial Arts Building of Craftsbury Academy (to be called the Rural Arts Center) we are poised to expand not only our woodshop space but also spaces for fiber arts, studio art, and pottery. Finally, the pilot Mountains of California field semester is going smoothly, with students settled into base camp on Mono Lake, having completed their first backpacking component.

Other current initiatives that support expanded student opportunities include the newly implemented Senior Year Research Project (SYRP or "syrup"). Whereas students have recently had the choice to complete a capstone study as a Senior Applied Research Project or a Senior Project, this new model combines these into one, within which a student may choose the number of credits they will pursue over a two-semester project (3-6 each semester), depending on the scope of their study. Academic Council is in the process of reviewing the structure by which matriculated students earn credit for summer SNAF courses, in order to streamline that process and ensure effective learning opportunities. We are also offering two core courses (Ecology and Writing & Speaking to the Issues) in a 5-5 intensive model this fall, on a trial basis; this will help assess the feasibility of increasing the number of courses offered in this model. Finally, a Lifelong Learning Portfolio model is being piloted with one student this fall. This is a structure by which students with significant and relevant previous experience may earn credits through an independent study in which they create a portfolio reflecting on their learning through this experience; similar models are in place at a number of other institutions. All of these initiatives will inform the faculty's ongoing conversations about next stages in our curricular evolution.

At the same time, we continue to work to strengthen systems around student advising. With student majors ("diplomas") now fully integrated into the student information system, faculty advisors have more tools at their disposal to support students' academic planning. We continue to pursue faculty training around strategies for learning support as well, and will welcome to campus a learning specialist later in the semester.

As the academic year commences, the Community and Work program continues to further integrate Community, Academics, and Work, with a focus on student leadership, diversity and inclusion, and accountability. With this intention, and to deepen student engagement, several opportunities have been created. Pablo Coddou, our college counselor, has expanded his role to include the functions of Coordinator of Diversity Engagement. With the Dean of Community, he will work with the President to address student experiences of racism in our community. Pablo will also advise the Roots group and

provide opportunities to deepen our conversations, and awareness of, racial justice and inclusion.

The Racial Justice Task Force continues its focus on strengthening and making more accessible our grievance procedures, and on addressing systemic racism and oppression in our community. Student leaders are deeply engaged in conversations around social justice and inclusion, holding membership on all councils and committees, and encouraging lively discussions among their peers. The new student position of Roots Liaison will work to support our affinity group for students of color on campus. The Heartbeat Lifesharing Lands Apprentice position is an opportunity for students to collaborate with the staff and residents of the Heartbeat Lifesharing Camphill Community in Hardwick. In collaboration with the academic instructional teams, the following positions have been approved and filled for the Fall 2017 semester: Adventure Facilitator (Outdoor Education), Alford Forge Attendant (Environmental Humanities), Houston Kitchen Manager (Sustainable Food Systems), GIS Data Management Specialist (Ecology) and the Naturalist Outings and Events Facilitator (Ecology).

This year the Work Program has transitioned from semester long student learning objectives to learning objectives that cover the full academic year. This transition has allowed students to articulate more robust objectives and collaborate with supervisors to cultivate deeper relationships between their work and our community and college-wide competencies. Student leaders in the Work and Community program engaged in week-long student leader training, building and nurturing a cohesive team of student leaders better equipped to support their peers in all aspects of their experience at Sterling.

Program Committee Agenda

Friday, October 13, 2017

4:00 - 5:15 p.m.

Mager Hall - Rachel Carson Room

- 1. Chair's Welcome*
- 2. Q&A Regarding the Program Committee Report (15 minutes)*
- 3. Update on The Wendell Berry Farming Program of Sterling College (30 minutes)*
- 4. Overview of faculty conversation with the President regarding (Re)Evolution Charge (30 minutes)*

TRUSTEESHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Presently, the Board of Trustees has 18 members. Ten voting members are women and 7 members are men. Only three are alumni of Sterling College and only one is a parent of an alumnus. To our knowledge, no member of the Board of Trustees identifies as a person of color. There is, known to the committee, only one retirement this fiscal year.

Last	First	Term	Eligibility
Alfond '13	Deborah	I	Eligible 2020
Baldwin	Margo	I	Secretary
Becker	Eric	II	Eligible 2019
Berry	Mary	I	Eligible 2020
Burros	Marian	III	Ineligible 2019
Chehayl, '06P	Pete	I	Chair
Derr	Matthew	II	President
Detweiler	Rick	II	Treasurer
Donnelly	Cathy	I	Eligible 2018
Gibbons	Ken	II	Vice Chair
Geer	Judy	II	Eligible 2020
Goldman '15	Claire	I	Ineligible 2019
Guldbrandsen	Thad	III	Ineligible 2020
Hooper	Allison	II	Officer at Larger
Koenig	Wendy	II	Eligible 2018
Larsen	Jon	I	Eligible 2019
Shelton	Bob	III	Ineligible 2018
Wormser '86	Julie	II	Eligible 2019

In June 2018, long time and distinguished trustee Robert Shelton will have fulfilled his eligibility for board service. At this meeting we will discuss our progress in cultivating the interest of a prospective candidate for consideration by the board at the Spring Meeting in April 2018. Cathy Donnelly, who is in her first term as a non-officer trustee, and Wendy Koenig, who is in her second as a non-officer trustee, are both eligible for reelection in April 2018.

At its last meeting, the Trusteeship Committee asked that five invitations to the Board of Advisors be extended. Matthew has met with each of these candidates and they will be presented for membership at the Autumn Meeting. Similarly, Matthew discussed emeritus status with a candidate and he will report on that conversation and ultimately consideration by the Board as a whole.

Trusteeship Committee Agenda

Friday, October 13, 2017

1:00-2:15 p.m.

Mager Hall - Rachel Carson Room

- 1. Chair's Welcome*
- 2. Q&A Regarding Trusteeship Report (5 minutes)*
- 3. Update on Board of Trustees candidates (10 minutes)*
- 4. Discussion of emeritus status and honorary degrees (20 minutes)*
- 5. Update on Board of Advisors candidates (10 minutes)*
- 6. Discussion of recruitment and board diversity (25 minutes)*