

Rationale

As the College approaches its 135th anniversary, we have begun to acknowledge our complex history, but what work has been done is scant and scattered. There is a great deal of energy, but it is inchoate. Passion outweighs training and capacity. Courses related to the History of the College and training in archival methods are offered too infrequently and sporadically for students to take advantage of them in a systematic way. The work of training and mentoring students in these methods frequently falls outside of defined staff and faculty job responsibilities. All of this work takes time, planning, coordination, energy, and ongoing communication, and those need to be recognized appropriately.

Through these recommendations, we seek to create infrastructure and systematic approaches that improve access to the resources, training, and funding necessary to more fully understand our histories and both celebrate and repair their legacies. We recognize that no one event or program or person can bear all of the weight of this work. At the same time, without dedicated staff whose explicit responsibility it is to coordinate this work, efforts may remain scattered.

Therefore, we recommend a model in which a full-time staff member would coordinate and support new and ongoing efforts related to the history of the College. We recognize that committing funding to support this work may well mean diverting resources and discontinuing other programs or activities. We also recognize that it takes time and energy to recruit excellent colleagues, and that the impacts of such colleagues may take time to manifest. We see this as a long-term effort to make deep change, but we have also recommended some more immediate changes, as part of an integrated model, to support student research projects.

There have been many projects and programs that uncover the past, include often excluded voices and stories, and acknowledge the complexities that continue to surface. These projects and programs include but are not limited to the Social Justice Partnership Program, the Pensby Fellowship program, The Albert M. Greenfield Digital Center for the History of Women's Education, the Black at Bryn Mawr Project, the Oral History project, and the Community Day of Learning (see [Appendix A](#) for a more comprehensive list). The College contributes resources to support this important work, and the model we are proposing ensures that we continue to learn from and support this work as we move forward. The staff member we propose will extend the work of existing programs by building on what we have learned, supporting this work in classrooms, and promoting this work at an institutional level.

In short, we propose collecting and making more transparent the work that has already been carried out, providing access to the methodological and technological training necessary for producing and sharing high-quality research, and dedicating funding to enable varied projects whose creative specificities we cannot predict but for which we can plan.

Recommendations

Components of a Sustainable Model: Staffing, Training, and Ongoing Financial Support

Staffing, Service, and Release Time

In order to ensure continuity and expand our capacity to support this work, we recommend moving toward hiring a full-time, dedicated staff position. To further distribute this important work, it will be necessary to revise job descriptions and support service for faculty.

Create a full-time, dedicated staff member who might:

- report to the Seymour Adelman Director of Special Collections in LITS
- work in close collaboration with the Pensby Center Director
- lead the College Histories Steering Committee
- organize regular and consistent training for students interested in conducting research on the histories and legacies of the College including through oral histories and archival research (e.g. a faculty member or an external group, such as the Science History Institute, might provide training)
- teach one course per year
- coordinate and publicize list of courses that teach methods or content related to College histories and legacies
- mentor students working on projects related to the history of the College
- liaise with Alumnae/i Relations to connect with alums
- conduct outreach and raise awareness about the pathways for students
- afford the College an opportunity to diversify the staff

Revise staff job descriptions to support this work:

- acknowledge that additional responsibilities to support this endeavor cannot be added to staff workloads without releasing from other duties

Recognize Service

- President's Office and Provost's Office work with the Appointments Committee to recognize faculty service in support of projects and mentoring focused on the histories of the College

Training

Faculty and staff regularly train students on how to carry out archival and historical research as well as how to engage with complex ideas, but this work is often ad hoc. This coordinated model attempts to map, extend, and make transparent the multiple pathways for how students can receive necessary training to carry out this work.

Develop courses that engage with the College's histories and legacies through existing curricular structures such as:

Podcasts about our histories

Exhibitions

Work-study projects

Fellowships for research related to a variety of topics such as the history of Perry House,

student activism, staff of color, art and artfivi and ar(r)ts p1(se)-11(,)a)-1p1(se)-4 e-11(,)a)0.000091

Annual Costs

Full-time staff, salary and benefits ¹	\$85,000
Pensby Center (Appendix B)	\$15,250
Projects budget	\$50,000
Total	\$150,250

¹ Benefits calculated using <https://www.brynmawr.edu/sites/default/files/Projected%20benefits%20rates%202020-24%2002132019.pdf>.

Appendix A

Catalogue of Known Projects and Programs

Title	Description
A Point of Difference	An exhibit created by Alexis De La Rosa '15 and Lauren Footman '14 that collected and shared experiences of Bryn Mawr College students and staff from Africa and the African Diaspora. The project was funded by Pensby Center internships.

[Black at Bryn Mawr](#)

A collaborative project started by Emma Kioko '15 and Grace Pusey '15 that draws from the College Archives to bring its history of racism back into colloquial awareness on campus. It also focuses on the experiences that Black and Brown students, staff members, and faculty members have had at different

History of Women in Science Project	<p>A collaborative project directed by Jessica Linker that reconstructs the spaces on campus where women practiced science at the turn of the nineteenth century in three-dimensional space.</p>
In Black and White	<p>An article by Florence Goff, retired Associate Chief Information Officer, for the <i>Alumnae Bulletin</i> which relates the history of admissions for black students at Bryn Mawr</p>
Offerings to Athena	<p>A book, edited by Anne Bruder, produced for the College's 125th anniversary, that provides a detailed history of Bryn Mawr College</p>

Oral Histories pilot project

