Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR) Annual Report, 2006-2007

The Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights met as a whole 23 times during the 2006-2007 academic year.

Five students approached the committee with potential grievances. In one case no action was taken; two other complaints were taken up by CAFR subcommittees and found to be without substance; and one inquiry was referred to the Dean of Studies for action. The other student case led to an informal inquiry by the entire committee (with the one faculty member recused), at the conclusion of which the student was discouraged from pursuing a formal complaint.

Five faculty approached the committee. Three of them decided not to initiate an inquiry, although one of these may approach the committee again next year. One other faculty complaint led to an informal inquiry. The fifth faculty inquiry came very late in the academic year, and will be taken up by the committee in the fall.

CAFR also made three policy recommendations this year, regarding:
1. Part One.X of the *Faculty Handbook.*
2. Part Six of the *Faculty Handbook.*
3. College policy on student grade grievances.

The committee wishes to record, in this annual report, our collective concern that CAFR will not be able to function as the arbiter of academic freedom and rights violations as effectively in the future as it has in the past. CAFR was denied access to a document the committee reasonably believed was necessary to properly conduct the inquiry regarding the complaint brought to us by a faculty member. The committee was also denied unmediated access to the person who compiled this document. As a result, that informal inquiry failed to be satisfactorily resolved. CAFR's Operating Code specifies the following: "In the pursuit of its duties the committee may seek information and expect the cooperation of students, faculty, and administration." In light of this year's failed inquiry, it appears that the committee can no longer be confident, as it always has been, about its unlimited access to requisite and appropriate information.

CAFR Members, 2006-2007

2007: Ruth Copans
Mary Stange, Chair
2008: Susannah Mintz
Richard Lindemann
2009: Richard Hihn
Lynda Vargha

2007: Sarah Palomba '07
Brittany Souza '08 (Fall only)
Cameron Dunn '08 (Spring only)

CAFR Members, 2007-2008

2008: Richard Lindemann (On Leave Fall)
Susannah Mintz
Monica Raveret-Richter (Fall only)

2009: Richard Hihn
Lynda Vargha, Chair

2010: Alice Dean
Lenora de la Luna