Dear Colleagues,

I write to you as we begin a new Copeland Colloquium, the third under an experimental interdisciplinary theme-based format that brings fellows to Amherst for a full academic year, to introduce this year’s fellows and to invite proposals for themes for the 2010-2011 colloquium.

This year’s theme is “It’s Not Easy Being Green: the Science, Politics, and Ethics of Environmentalism.” I am pleased to welcome Bethany Bradley, Chris Cuomo, C. Josh Donlan, Seth Shulman, and Diana Pei Wu to Amherst and look forward to what are sure to be stimulating conversations this year. You can read about the fellows, the theme, and upcoming events at https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/colloquia/copeland_colloquium.

Proposals for themes for 2010-2011 are due in my office by October 19, 2009, and the Research Awards Committee will make the theme selection by the end of October. The theme will be chosen for its intrinsic merit and capacity to interest different faculty constituencies. Groups proposing Copeland themes should have a minimum of three faculty members from at least two academic departments. Proposals should include a brief description of the proposed theme, along with an explanation of its appeal to colleagues in different disciplines and a budget for programming. The maximum allocation available in 2010-2011 to support stipends for four to six Copeland Fellows and the colloquium’s programming is $220,000. Each proposal should include a budget totaling no more than $220,000 that describes how this funding would be distributed for programming and Fellows’ stipends. We have found that offering stipends of approximately $35,000 for junior fellows and $50,000 for more senior fellows has allowed us to attract excellent candidates to the Copeland Colloquium. Each fellow also receives $2,500 for research, travel, and/or moving expenses. If applicable, the names of potential Copeland Fellows may be included in the proposal. Six copies of each proposal should be sent to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty.

Once a faculty group’s theme has been selected, that group becomes responsible, with support from the Office of the Dean of the Faculty, for setting the intellectual direction of the program and organizing associated events during the year in which the theme is explored. The group is encouraged to consider inviting one or two Copeland Fellows, choosing the remainder from the Amherst Faculty’s nominations, and/or through a national or international fellowship competition. The theme group is also expected to assign from among its members one or two Faculty Sponsors for each Copeland Fellow. The sponsors will be available to the Copeland Fellows as advisors and mentors and will facilitate the fellows’ interaction with other faculty members and with students. Faculty Sponsors will also provide workspace for the fellows, as well as limited administrative services through their departments. Fellows are responsible for securing their own housing. Faculty Sponsors may serve as liaisons for rental assistance; Bette Abrams-Esche, who can be reached at ext. 2014 and at babramsesche@amherst.edu, in the Office of the Dean of the Faculty can provide some information about housing opportunities.
The colleagues who proposed this year’s theme are Ethan Clotfelter, Jan Dizard, Robert Hayashi, Jill Miller, and Joe Moore (now on leave). Jill is serving as Bethany Bradley’s Faculty Sponsor; Jan is the Faculty Sponsor for Chris Cuomo and Seth Shulman; Ethan is Josh Donlan’s Faculty Sponsor; and Robert is Diana Pei Wu’s Faculty Sponsor. Please feel free to contact these colleagues or past sponsors (the names of whom appear on the Copeland Website) if you have questions or need advice as you prepare your proposals.

I want to thank last year’s Copeland Fellows—Mark Doyle, Amy Huber, Serge Margel, Maple Razsa, and Leo Zaibert and the colleagues who participated in the theme group—Carleen Basler, Tom Dumm, Catherine Epstein, Laure Katsaros, Austin Sarat, and Paola Zamperini—for helping the campus to explore the theme of “Violent States” throughout 2008-2009. I would also like to acknowledge the departments across the campus for the tremendous administrative support that they provided to the Copeland program.

If you have any questions about the Copeland Colloquium or the proposal process, please contact Amrita Basu at ext. 2942 or abasu@amherst.edu or Janet Tobin at ext. 8483 or jstobin@amherst.edu.

All my best,
Greg