The Swarthmore College Labor Mediation Committee

(0.a) The Swarthmore College Labor Mediation Committee (LMC) is a group of members of the Swarthmore community - staff, faculty, and students - dedicated to improving working conditions for College staff and empowering them to form their own mechanism for dealing with grievances.

I. Constitution of the Committee

(I.a) The LMC is an independent group, not connected organizationally or financially to Swarthmore College. It is a mediation service between staff members and management.

(I.b) At the beginning, the LMC is made up of students, faculty, and professional staff of the College. Eventually, it will become an all-worker group, with concerned students, faculty, and professional staff acting only as assistants.

(I.c) By June of 1994, 25% of the members of the LMC will be workers from dining services and housekeeping; the ultimate goal of a 100% worker committee is June 1995. Once the committee is made up entirely of workers, it may reconstitute itself into a group that, structurally and in terms of its mission, best fulfills the needs of the workers.

(I.d) Until June of 1994, new members of the committee will be selected from applicants by a majority of existing members. From June of 1994 until the all-worker Committee is formed, a consensus rejection by the workers on the committee will be sufficient to block the appointment of a new member. Once the all-worker committee is formed, members will be elected by the workers themselves.

(I.e) During the Spring semester of 1995, the Committee will determine if conditions are ripe for the transition to an all-worker committee. If so, a subcommittee will be formed to oversee the transition. The subcommittee may continue to meet, to ensure continuity during the transition process, until the newly constituted Committee decides its function has been fulfilled.

II. Procedures of the LMC

(II.a) The LMC endeavors to bring workers' complaints and concerns to the attention of the management. It learns of these complaints in two ways: (1) it makes itself available to workers who, at their leisure, bring up grievances; and (2) it specifically schedules hearings and interviews - informal and formal - in order to hear from as many employees as possible.

(II.b) Any concern brought up by a worker is brought to the attention of the management and is officially recorded by the Committee. This official log, without the names of complainants, is published as part of the Committee's semesterly report. The Committee will attempt to solve the problem in negotiations with
management; the outcome of the negotiations will also be published as part of the report.

(II.c) Concerns brought up by several different workers, as well as those concerns and incidents deemed by the Committee to be particularly egregious, will be investigated further. If the Committee deems it necessary, a more thorough investigation will be launched. The Committee may take whatever action it deems necessary to attempt to solve such problems; such actions may include, but are not limited to, negotiations with management; negotiations with higher College administration or the Board of Managers; recommending work actions; and public campaigns.

(II.d) At the end of each semester, the Committee will publish a report detailing the complaints and concerns raised by workers, the resolution of any complaints, and including the Committee's commentary on the status of worker-management relations. The report will be made available to the Board of Managers, College administration, students, faculty, staff, management, and the general public. At the discretion of the editorial staff, it may be published in the Phoenix as well.

(II.e) In no case will action by the Committee be contingent on a worker's waiving anonymity. The Committee will not, without the worker's permission, disclose the name or other identifying information about workers involved with or communicating the Committee.

III. The Committee's Relationship to Swarthmore College

(III.a) Swarthmore College, including but not limited to the management of the College dining service, recognizes the LMC as the legitimate representative of workers in its constituencies.

(III.b) The Committee's office space and basic operating needs (telephone and office equipment and supplies) are provided by Swarthmore College in a convenient location on campus.

(III.c) As the legitimate representative of the workers, Swarthmore College agrees:

1- to refer all cases of termination, suspension, or other disciplinary action against employees in the Committee's constituencies to the Committee for review before they become final;

2- that no worker who has been in communication with the Committee in the last three months will be terminated, suspended, or otherwise disciplined without a specific charge, evidence presented, and a hearing before the Committee.

3- that employees' records with management will not reflect and connection they may have with the Committee, including but not limited to membership in the Committee; communication (written or oral) with it; support (written, oral, or otherwise) for actions and positions it takes; and complaints (written, oral, or otherwise) submitted to it.

4- that the Committee will be alerted to and allowed to review proposed changes in procedure by the management at least two weeks before such changes take effect.
that actions taken by the management that are not in
keeping with the above are grounds for legal or other action at
the Committee's discretion.

IV. Amendments to this Charter

(IV.a) Nothing in this Charter may be construed to obstruct
the Committee's central mission: to represent, to the best of its
ability, the needs and wishes of its constituencies, the staff of
Swarthmore College.

(IV.b) As such, no amendment may be made to this Charter
that is not in keeping with that central mission.

(IV.c) As long as the change is in harmony with the previous
paragraph, this Charter may be changed by a 2/3 vote of the
membership of the Committee at any time.

(IV.d) This Charter will be considered the provisional
document for the newly created all-worker Committee; it may be
rewritten or substantially amended by that Committee by a simple
majority vote.
Labor Mediation Committee
Care of Andrew Perrin
Swarthmore College
500 College Avenue
Swarthmore, PA 19081-1397
March 4, 1993

Larry Schall
Linda McDougall
Swarthmore College
500 College Avenue
Swarthmore, PA 19081-1397

Dear Mr. Schall and Ms. McDougall:

We were distressed to learn that, in contrast to the situation regarding student and faculty relations with administration, there is no adequate grievance and mediation procedure for employees in dining services. In the interest of furthering the sense of community at Swarthmore, we would like to play that role temporarily, with a long-term eye toward a committee of workers themselves to bring up concerns.

We are writing to let you know of a new committee that is forming, the Swarthmore College Labor Mediation Committee. This independent committee, currently made up of faculty, students, and professional staff, is dedicated to improving communication between workers and management in the dining services.

As you will no doubt expect, the success of this endeavor depends on your willingness to treat the LMC as the legitimate representative of dining service workers. As the representative committee, we ask that:

1.) The LMC be provided with a campus office and rudimentary office equipment;
2.) A legitimate representative of the College sign a letter agreeing to the terms outlined in the enclosed Charter, specifically including the guarantee of job security for workers who participate in activities involving the committee (paragraph III.c.2).

We would like very much to meet with you, as well as any other representatives of the College administration, to discuss the Committee and the changes it hopes to produce. We hope to be able to announce the formation of the Committee within the next few weeks; we would therefore suggest a meeting the week of March 15.

We look forward to working with you to improve the Swarthmore community.

Yours truly,

Andrew J. Perrin
for the LMC

encl: Full list of LMC members
The members of the Labor Mediation Committee:

Andrew J. Perrin '94
Ben Schreier '94
Thompson Bradley

Michael Murphy '95
Laure Gerber '96