

APPENDIX D

GUIDELINES FOR THE PITZER COLLEGE LANDSCAPE

1. Campus landscaping should reflect our climate and geological setting. Geologically, Pitzer is situated on an alluvial fan at the foot of some of the steepest mountains in the world. Biologically, we are at the intersection of the mountainous chaparral community with the coastal sage scrub of the valley. In a broader sense, we are part of the arid and semi-arid American Southwest that embraces New Mexico, Arizona, and parts of Utah and Nevada, as well as southern California and Baja. Climatically, we live in one example of a "Mediterranean" climate (mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers), which we share with the countries of the Mediterranean rim and parts of southern Africa, Australia, and Chile.

Geographically, we can communicate a sense of place by keeping the campus open to a view of the mountains; geologically, by incorporating granitic boulders, cobbles, and decomposed granite into the built landscape; floristically, by preserving remnants of the natural landscape and by using native plants both individually and in their natural patterns of association.

The notion of "native" plants is not as simple or restrictive as is sometimes assumed; it is more like a multi-dimensional set of concentric circles. For example, there are plants native to the San Antonio Wash; plants native to the alluvial scrub ecosystems of southern California; plants native to southern California generally; plants native to the American Southwest; and plants appropriate to this place because they are native to one or another of the world's climatically "Mediterranean" areas. Examples of things that are not meaningful to do here include installing English gardens, planting rows of eastern trees, and introducing redwoods under the guise of "California natives."

2. The campus should be designed to conserve water. Although Claremont is not desert (less than ten inches average rainfall), it is semi-arid (sixteen inches average rainfall). It can support endless green lawns and rows of exotic street trees only by taking water from other regions. This long-term situation is punctuated by periodic drought, protests from the water colonies, spasms of water rationing, and rising water prices. Pitzer's landscape needs to move further in the direction of "xeriscape" (landscaping appropriate for dry climates), which involves such things as more efficient irrigation, limitation of water-consumptive turfgrass to areas where it is needed for specific functions (e.g., playing fields), and the user of "drought-tolerant or "water-wise" plant material.

As the new master plan is implemented, there will be more turfgrass (and therefore more water use) because there will be more playing fields. In this situation, we need to choose our varieties of turfgrass wisely, design our irrigation systems carefully, offset the new water use by reducing water use in other parts of the campus (for example, by converting some grassy areas to less water-consumptive vegetation), and explore ways of reusing irrigation water that runs off playing fields and parking lots. In order to monitor and control water use, metering is essential for specific buildings and landscape areas, but until 1991 there was only one water meter for the entire College. Two meters were added as part of the East Mesa project, and this practice needs to continue as new buildings are built and portions of the campus are newly landscaped or altered. In addition, the College should investigate the state of the art with regard to rain gauges and moisture sensors to see if they should be included as an integral part of a water-conserving irrigation system. As for plant material, there is a great overlap (though by no means a complete correspondence) between the xeriscape principle and the principle of using native plants. The general use of xeriscape does not preclude the occasional use of some water-consumptive native plants if these are grouped on separate irrigation lines and do not dominate the landscape. More precise guidelines will need to be developed after the city of Claremont adopts its version of the Model Landscape Ordinance

mandated by AB 325, developed by the Department of Water Resources, and currently being adapted for Claremont by former Pitzer student Gerald Taylor.

3. The campus landscape should be educational. It can communicate a sense of place and demonstrate how people can live more within the limits of their region's resources. It can provide an environment conducive to learning by providing outdoor nooks, both sunny and shady, where members of the College community can read, meditate, write, and converse. It is also possible to display some of the different dimensions of nativity in instructive ways that provide variety and support the College's commitment to intercultural understanding. For example, instead of simply mixing Australian, southern African, and southern Californian plantings, we could have an Australian and/or a southern African garden, perhaps at one or more of the new buildings. A sign and labels, or a brochure, could interpret these gardens to us and to campus visitors. A different garden might focus on Native American uses of southern California plants, while another might highlight introduced plants that had, over time, become "naturalized."
4. Campus plantings should be interesting and attractive, with attention to shape, texture, and color. More attention should be paid to planting for the long run (e.g., trees that will be magnificent specimens after many years). More attention should be paid to plantings that bloom over the seasons, instead of just in the summer when the main College program is on vacation.
5. The landscape should help unify the campus, which will increasingly contain buildings of different styles and periods. Unity might be accomplished partly by using certain native plant species as "theme" trees and shrubs in different parts of the campus, especially at points of entrance, exit, and transition. Certain associations of plants might also become a distinctive Pitzer characteristic. In addition, proper landscaping can soften the intrusive mediocrity of some of the older buildings, as through the use of climbing vines on blank walls.
6. Grounds management should emphasize ecological understanding of soil development and maintenance, biotechnical cycling, species and age diversity, and structural and physiological adaptation of the vegetation. It should shun the practice of planting monocultures of nutrient- and water-demanding, exotic vegetation on nutrient-poor, rapidly-draining soils. Such practices create drought- and pest-prone landscaping, which we then "force" with increased water, fertilizer, and pesticides.
7. Finally, and equal in importance to the other goals, landscaping should reflect the spirit of the College. This spirit is not expressed by the imperialism of imposing rigid, geometric forms--or alien plant species--upon the natural world, but by a more "naturalistic" style that is informal, diverse, and respectful of natural patterns and native species.

STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND PRINCIPLES

Pitzer College strives to incorporate socially and environmentally sound practices into the operations of the College and the education of our students. Pitzer exists within inter-reliant communities that are affected by personal and institutional choices, and the College is mindful of the consequences of our practices. A Pitzer education should involve not just a mastery of ideas, but a life lived accordingly. We are thus committed to principles of sustainability, and dedicated to promoting awareness and knowledge of the impacts of our actions on human and natural communities.