

February 17, 2011

Present: Professors Siouxsie Easter, CJ Koepp, Ernie Olson, Tom Stiadle; Associate Provost for Academic and Student Life Cindy Speaker; Provost and Dean Leslie Miller-Bernal.

The meeting began at 9:30 a.m.

1. Minutes of February 10 were reviewed and approved.
2. The meeting focused on discussing a component of the proposed Sustainable Community minor--a week in January, Living & Learning Together (L & LT). We talked about a range of issues, from the types of workshops that could be offered to practical issues that would need to be addressed. Points raised included:
 - a. We estimate that about 300 students might be on campus next year, assuming we require all first-year students to participate and many upper-class students will want to participate.
 - b. We noted logistical issues, such as how athletes would manage to complete this requirement (3 L< weeks over 4 years at Wells) since they need to participate in practices and games during this time, and how costs for students would have to be adjusted.
 - c. A conference model means there should be a variety of formats used, such as a plenary session, a keynote, panels, round table discussions, student presentations, etc.
 - d. We want to emphasize the fun side of learning as well as the community side of Wells that enhances learning.
 - e. We hope that students will be encouraged to be creative and try activities that they might generally avoid, for example, pottery, dance, calligraphy, or book-binding.
 - f. We'd like to use evenings, too, since students may be more relaxed then.
 - g. Films with discussions would be a good idea. Arts & Lectures might be able to schedule an event or two for this week.
 - h. Teaching skills, such as financial planning, car repair, and cooking would be appropriate.
 - i. Helping students learn to write better should be a goal. Papers which first-year students submitted for any of their fall semester courses could be reviewed and improved upon.
 - j. Self-improvement might be a theme—how to choose nutritious foods in the dining hall and doing exercise could be a starting point.
 - k. We should reserve a slot for current events—the specific topic could vary each year depending on what's going on in the world.

- i. Service learning could include campus beautification, cleaning up or building something approved and needed at Wells. This would enhance practical skills, too.
3. We discussed what we might say to faculty and staff volunteers for this subcommittee and some issues we'd like the subcommittee to deal with:
 - a. A time schedule—length of sessions
 - b. What kinds of events there will be (plenary with no choice, but then choice of other sessions?)
 - c. How Wells will administer awarding one semester of credit, for example, how many activities does each student have to complete for this credit? Who will monitor? Thinking of repeats in future years, can students in the second L< week (in 2013) repeat activities she or he has done in 2012?
 - d. Some activities that might be compulsory for all first-year students: keynote, writing exercises using previously graded papers
 - e. We want to emphasize group activities (community emphasis), and we'd like to mix up individuals within groups. This might involve role reversals.
 - f. We need to get input from faculty and students for other ideas for the L< week.
 - g. Some staff should be involved, including the Coordinator of Learning Support Services, the Director of Experiential Learning, and librarians
 - h. We might use upper-class students to talk to first-year students about topics such as "Things you wish you had known before entering college," or have recent grads talk to upper-class students on issues they will soon face.
 - i. We might want to include field trips to local historical sites.
 - j. Bird watching could be incorporated.
 - k. We should make use of local service learning opportunities, such as, at the library or United Ministry.
 - l. Would it be possible to have wine workshops?
4. The subcommittee on L< will be co-chaired by Professors Ernie Olson and Siouxsie Easter. Student Representative Alex Schloop '12 will be asked to be a member, too, in order to maintain an important link with students. We are asking for a preliminary report by the first week after Spring Break, March 28.
5. Assignment for next week's meeting:
 - a. Write a two-sentence description of the meaning of the first-year themed seminars on Meaningful Lives: Relationships between Self & Society.
 - b. Review all returned surveys from major chairs on capstones that Rhonda Dellinger will forward to us and be prepared to discuss them.

6. Meeting adjourned at about 10:50 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Miller-Bernal
Secretary pro tem