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From: "McDaniel, Jay" <McDaniel@hendrix.edu>
Date: Wed, 21 May 2008 16:26:30 -0500
To: "Maslin-wicks, Kim" <Maslin-wicks@hendrix.edu>
Cc: "Sutherland, David" <sutherlandd@hendrix.edu>
Conversation: Report on Summer CW Workshop
Subject: Report on Summer CW Workshop

Dear Dr. Maslin-Wicks,

In what follows I offer an account of the faculty workshop on the CW requirement that we had in the summer of 2007-2008. CW refers to Challenges of the Contemporary World, which is one of three components within the Collegiate Center. The others are Journeys and Explorations.

On the morning of May 20, 2008, fifteen faculty from different disciplines met to discuss the future of CW in light of the consultant's report of 2004-2005 and the work of the CW committee in 2007-2008. Our task during that morning was (1) to consider anew the consultant's report, with its various critiques of the existing CW program; and (2) to consider a proposal offered by Dr. Falls Corbitt concerning one way of revising the proposal presented to the faculty by the 2007-2008 committee.

In the course of the morning we had wide-ranging discussions on how the CW requirement is related to the aims and purposes of the college. We realized that it would be helpful to have data on whether and how students are taking given courses from among the CW list. We considered the possibility that there need not be a CW requirement at all, if in fact a majority of students were taking such courses without even knowing they satisfied the CW requirement. We discussed what it means, symbolically, to have a required course or set of courses in the Collegiate Center. We reviewed the relation (historical and conceptual) of the CW requirement to Journeys, as that relation is explained in the proposal to the faculty of 2007-2008. And we considered various ways the CW requirement might be retained and revised: (1) the Falls-Corbitt option and (2) the changing of CW to a learning domain.

The morning included an presentation by Dr. David Sutherland, in which he explained how our deliberations fit into the assessment process. A key result of this discussion with Dr. Sutherland was that we realized the importance of developing learning goals for CW.

Toward the end of the meeting we began the process of developing such goals, building upon three criteria that were part of the 2007-2008. Our meeting ended with the hope that our work might serve as a constructive springboard for the work on the 2008-2009 CW committee.

Jay McDaniel
Acting Chair, CW Committee 2007-2008
Chair, Department of Religion
Director, Steel Center for the Study of Religion and Philosophy
Hendrix College
Conway, Arkansas
Phone: 501-450-1366