

**MINUTES**  
**Academic Senate**  
**December 1, 2016**  
**3:15 p.m.**  
**Founders Room**

**Members present:** John Blondell (Professor of Theatre Arts), Lisa DeBoer (Professor of Art History), Michelle Hardley (Secretary - Registrar), David Hunter (Professor of Mathematics), Michelle Hughes (Professor of Education), Tremper Longman (Professor of Religious Studies), Edd Noell (Professor of Economics and Business), Ray Rosentrater (Professor of Mathematics), Mark Sargent (Chair and Provost), David Vander Laan (Professor of Philosophy), Caleb Wilson (WCSA Student Rep)

**Others present:** Cynthia Toms (Professor of Kinesiology)

**Absent:** Patti Hunter (Vice Provost), Tatiana Nazarenko (Dean of Curriculum and Educational Effectiveness),

**I. Devotional Thoughts – Edd Noell**

**II. The minutes from November 17<sup>th</sup> were approved.**

**III. Discussion on the Diversity Responses from the Faculty Meeting**

Senators discussed the table responses to the Diversity Assessment report which was presented at the last Faculty Meeting.

There were a number of different themes that emerged. One was some discussion on the ways that we define diversity. The concern senators had here was that we could spend a lot of time trying to find the perfect definition of diversity and never reach a point where we were able to truly engage the issue. What we may need to do is settle on 2-3 areas of diversity as a college, that we can all agree on, and focus our initial efforts there. Another option would be to target 2-3 areas of diversity that are less contentious, and then move out to other areas from there. Then in future years we can continue to expand the definition into other areas of diversity.

In addition, we need to determine if we as a faculty have owned the idea of diversity as a valuable thing. If we have, then our efforts here will have passion behind them, and a richness and vitality in the process will take hold. Many times diversity is framed as a negative thing, we need to take care to frame the goals and the process in positive ways.

Another area of discussion was in the methods for approaching education within the diversity area. Multiple exposure points were recommended, including a possible embedding of the topic within the Orientation program, various GE areas, the Chapel program (musical selections from the main chapel band and the speakers chosen)

and within the majors were suggested. The goal would be to embed the diversity discussion within existing structures and create spaces where students could synthesize their learning across these areas.

There were also some practical ways to enrich our understanding of diversity that were mentioned. One would be to continue to diversify our faculty and our student body. The nature of conversations on diversity change when there is a diverse group of people in the room. Also mentioned was the need to discuss the language and the vision of the Diversity ILO. The language could be warmer and more encouraging, and suggest ways to live out the ILO. The language of the ILO should also be rooted in a biblical understanding of the value of diversity, and it should be grounded in the ways that we can enrich our culture and raise the capacity for learning to take place. As we move forward, it was also felt that faculty and students may need more practical training and resources to feel equipped to engage in conversations on diversity.

In terms of the assessment work that was done, there was a concern that the focus of the assessment was done from a social science view of the issue. Are there ways that we can think about diversity from different lenses?

It was noted that most of the discussion was focused on Questions 1 and 3. One suggestion on how to work with this was to focus on three different areas:

1. Have an early exposure to diverse perspectives in the Christian Doctrine or Old Testament courses – we are likely doing this work already in these areas but making our instruction more explicit for the students on issues of diversity
2. Make chapel more reflective of the church universal. This includes the worship component.
3. Have a later exposure to diverse perspectives – either in the GE program or in the major programs and create a space where students can reflect on their learning.

#### **IV. Proposal to Create a Create a Global Studies Minor**

Cynthia Toms presented the latest version of the Global Studies minor. The goal of the minor is to allow students to go deeper into their understanding of global connections and build off of their off campus programs experience. Through the minor they will be able to deepen their learning about the interconnected world they live in.

The minor would require one additional semester of a Modern Foreign language beyond the required semester in the general education program. There would also be an Interdisciplinary Studies seminar course with leadership opportunities, and a research capstone project that is global in either focus or location.

Senators had questions on the nature of the research capstone and the types of off campus programs that would be allowed to meet the off campus experience portion

of the minor. The concern is that some programs we operate (Westmont Downtown and Westmont in San Francisco) may not automatically meet the global exposure needs of the minor. Other concerns were raised about the programs with rotating faculty. Depending on the faculty leading the program, these may not meet the global exposure needs of the minor either.

Suggestions were made to either work with these programs to tweak their curriculum so that it meets the minors needs or to have all students petition to add the minor and justify how their abroad experience qualifies for the minor in their petition. It maybe that a hybrid of these suggestions is possible, one that allows for certain "Westmont in" programs to be preapproved for the minor and other off campus programs (e.g. Westmont Downtown, Westmont in San Francisco, 3<sup>rd</sup> party provider programs) to be approved for individual students via petition. How this issue is addressed may mean that the minor focuses less on which courses a student takes when abroad, and more on the overall experience offered in the program they attend.

Mark and Cynthia will work on refining the language and will bring back a final proposal in a future meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michelle Hardley