

Minutes for CEPP Meeting of 9/17/02

Present: John Brueggeman, Pat Fehling (Chair), Hugh Foley, Chuck Joseph, Andy Kirshenbaum, Pat Oles, Amelia Rauser, Ray Rodrigues, Paty Rubio, Gordon Thomson.

I. Approval of minutes from Meeting #1

- Minutes of 9/12/02 were approved

II. Announcements

- PF introduced Ray Rodriguez to the committee
- PF discussed the state of the CEPP web page (no archived minutes, etc.) and the procedure for adding new minutes to the web page (plain text files sent to CEPP-list-web)
- HF agreed to work with PF on managing the web page and archiving CEPP activity for the year

III. Agenda items for the coming year in rank order

- PF discussed the outcome of the rank ordering of the agenda items
 1. Academic Vision: 5/7 ranked #1
 2. Distance/On-Line Learning: 2/7 ranked #1 (close second)
 3. Assessment of Core Curriculum: PF will discuss with RR and Paul Sattler (Chair of CC)
 4. Co-Curricular Life: Linked to Academic Vision
 5. Advising: Linked to Academic Vision
 6. LSI: Michael Marx and PF will discuss, possibly including Paul Sattler (Chair of CC)
- After circulating a memo related to Academic Vision, CJ provided his perspectives on the topic. CJ wondered if the faculty (and CEPP) had the energy for addressing Academic Vision after the recent major curricular revisions (reconfiguration and core curriculum). Various members discussed the steps that preceded the recent curricular revisions. CJ argued that in spite of a common self-characterization of Skidmore as a risk-taking institution, we don't seem particularly distinctive from our comparison group. He also thought that the change we initiated was rarely "edgy" change but often the dull compromise of tweekers. JB later argued that such compromise was the natural byproduct of strong constituencies unwilling to make concessions. CJ provided examples of institutions that he perceived as more innovative (e.g., Kenyon, Williams).
- Discussion of process ensued, which included such points as:
 - a) the need to consider economic constraints, so that people weren't disappointed when a popular proposal couldn't be enacted (GT);
 - b) the potential disharmony between increases in the size of the student body and the goal of close student-faculty collaborations (GT);
 - c) retention problems often drive the need for replacements at the first-year level, which creates the apparent disharmony (PO);
 - d) the need to articulate a clear goal to drive Academic Vision (AR);
 - e) a lack of coherence, particularly as related to diversity issues (PR);
 - f) the importance of addressing Academic Vision from a curricular perspective (PO);
 - g) the litmus test of asking if one would be proud to send one's child to Skidmore (RR)

- The lively discussion ran up against time constraints, with some members expressing a willingness to continue the discussion of Academic Vision for several weeks. PF set some goals for the next meeting and then the committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Hugh J. Foley