

CEPP Minutes for Meeting of Nov. 27, 2001

Members present: Sandy Baum (Chair), John Berman, John Brueggemann, Pat Fehling, Frank Gonzalez, Doug Humphrey, Mike Meguerdichian, Pat Oles, Linda Simon (minutes), Janet Sorenson

Sandy began by identifying CEPP's goals for the rest of the semester: formulating a statement about the Strategic Plan and writing a progress report on the question of distance learning.

To that end, we discussed a list of points distilled from our inquiries into the Strategic Plan, starting from the last point and moving up.

1. Technology: should technology be at the forefront of pedagogy? We agreed that technology in itself is not a "good," but that faculty should be given support for learning technology, attending conferences and workshops, and considering ways to integrate technology, where appropriate, into their pedagogy. Applying this question to faculty hiring, John Berman said that criteria for teaching should be a CAPT issue. We concluded, though, that we would like the Strategic Plan changed to read that technology is a tool for learning, and not a primary tool for learning.
2. Liberal Studies: Janet suggested that we go through the catalogue and ascertain which programs or courses represent interdisciplinarity; John Berman said that Sue Bender could give us an overview of interdisciplinary programs. We agreed that this information would be helpful to begin a conversation about interdisciplinarity, whether we want to maintain what we have, or whether we want to put more resources into such programs. Sandy suggested that the cutback of the LS program may not reflect a lack of commitment to interdisciplinarity, but may reflect the distribution of such courses throughout the curriculum, not represented only by LS.
3. Faculty hiring: CEPP would like the College to support interdisciplinarity through discipline-based faculty. We discussed whether new hiring should be connected to reduced teaching load. Sandy suggested that more faculty lines could free up faculty to do better what we're struggling to do now. Janet suggested a stronger statement: if we don't have new lines we won't be able to deliver the programs that we have now and to meet our goals. Frank noted that more has been required of us in the last ten years (publications, service, increased criteria for tenure and promotion) without any reduction in teaching load. John Brueggemann suggested that faculty hiring should be the lead item of any statement CEPP makes about the Strategic Plan, but asked for concrete information about the costs of faculty lines. John Berman said that 27 faculty lines would be needed to give us a 15-credit teaching load. Other issues, such as compensation, benefits, and new facilities for faculty are involved in cost; Pat Oles agreed to provide some information about the per capita cost of a new faculty member.
 - a. As a sub-question of faculty hiring, we discussed identifying departments in need. Criteria for such departments would include course caps/use rate; adjuncts; diversity of courses offered; ability of the department to deliver the major; comparison of courses on the books with how often such courses are offered; dept's contribution to interdisciplinary programs.
4. As we focused on what CEPP would recommend at the next faculty meeting or to IPC, John Brueggemann wisely cautioned, "We ought to be bold, but we shouldn't be foolish." We decided, therefore, that two issues -- new faculty and financial aid -- should be at the forefront of our goals in the Strategic Plan. We agreed that IPC needs to get from the Writing Group a single text for discussion, and then, as Janet suggested, IPC needs to provide a structure for enacting the plan: that is, IPC needs to show us policies that would realize the goals of the plan. Pat Oles reminded us that a student-centered document will "play better externally" than a faculty-centered document, and we agreed that the rhetoric of the new plan needs to consider its audience.