

CEPP Minutes, November 14, 2003

Present: Michael Arnush (scribe), Meghan Fair, Hugh Foley, Frank Gonzalez, Pat Oles, David Peterson, Paty Rubio, Ray Rodrigues

1. Minutes of the Nov. 7, 2003 meeting approved with revisions.
2. GT: work continues on the retention task force (CRAP). MA requested that we consider retention beyond the first year, which led to a discussion of the duration of the advisor/advisee relationship. HF suggested we not let CEPP's ViSta and agenda take on too many issues now, and that some issues can receive consideration down the road. The critical issues remain the first-year course, residential life, advising and mentoring, and the all-college requirements.

Other issues germane to retention that we discussed included

- why some students choose to transfer from Skidmore: Pat Oles summarized the NSSE data, which show that the preponderance of transfers occur due to the the quality of social life and the academic tone.
 - making stronger connections between the first-semester academic experience with residential life ("living/learning communities") (FG)
 - emphasizing standards and expectations by focusing sufficiently on academic rigor, both for faculty and for students (DP, RR)
 - correlating attrition data with high school performance, probably a better indicator of college-level performance than the exit interviews can indicate reasons for transfer (HF); this led to a discussion of under/overachievers ("smart slackers" vs. "strivers")
3. Subcommittee reports:
 - HF for first-year: meetings only in small groups since last week. Terry Diggory has suggested a planning scheme that outlines how students will identify and articulate regularly their academic goals. HF expects that the subcommittee will propose a one-course first-year experience by the end of the semester.
 - MA for study abroad and diversity: moving ahead on multiple fronts, we're nearing closure on proposals for integrating study abroad into a student's Skidmore career; on Cori Filson's proposal for limiting the choices of programs available through good mentoring, and enhancing opportunities for study abroad by making current aid available for the tuition for all overseas programs; and on integrating intercultural studies and international education into the curriculum.
 4. This afternoon's open faculty forum on the ViSta:
 - HF will take minutes
 - focus: to maintain our momentum; substance: the ViSta recommendations, which GT will lay out briefly *seriatim* and then invite comments.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Arnush