COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO
STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION:
Provost’s Breakfast with the Faculty
Wednesday, November 19, 2014

Discussion of two Strategic Planning topics: Our Commitment to Student Success and 21st Century Curriculum. (Summary of discussion, not a transcription.)

Stan Wearden, Senior VP/Provost:
• Every institution wants to revise its core curriculum, and everyone finds it a fraught process; it might be easier at Columbia because everyone here is invested in the conversation
• The core’s status as the “LAS Core” is problematic – it should really be the “Columbia Core,” and should incorporate courses from across the college
• Noted President Kim’s focus on developing students’ entrepreneurship/marketing skills and facility with technology
• Learning outcomes should be universal in nature, and should be able to be embedded in courses in a variety of ways
• Called for professionally-oriented graduate education, saying the college could accommodate larger numbers of graduate students (both in-person and online, the latter being an area where Columbia is behind the curve); touted the value of graduate and online courses as revenue generators
• Recommended offering IAI (Illinois Articulation Initiative) core courses to high school students online as transferable credits (to Columbia, or elsewhere)

Michael Niederman, Chair, Television:
• Department offers 2nd BA degrees, would like to have the ability to offer graduate programs
• Noted the closed-off nature of Columbia’s existing graduate programs, as well as problematic dynamics between undergraduate and graduate students

Beatrix Budy, Science & Mathematics:
• Graduate students should be able to take undergraduate classes with graduate-level content

Stan Wearden:
• There are too many roadblocks right now to graduate education; a small number of faculty have been keeping it alive, but that very protectiveness itself can have the unintended effect of creating roadblocks

Bonita Winer, Cinema Art + Science:
• Agreed that combined undergraduate/graduate courses are a great idea – noted that many of her students want to teach

Virginia Heaven, Fashion Design:
• The core could be multileveled, incorporating department foundational courses to address students’ discipline-specific needs as well as college-wide requirements
• There needs to be more dialogue between the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the major departments – and more faculty conversation in general – with regard to making classes more inclusive
Margot Wallace, Business & Entrepreneurship:
- We need to introduce the idea of graduate education from the beginning of students’ college careers, to plant the seed

Peter Zhang, Audio Arts & Acoustics / Director, China Initiatives:
- Online education would help make the college more accessible and affordable for international students
- Idea of offering core classes to high school students could be expanded to international students as well

Michael Niederman:
- TV offers a Career Strategies course, which includes presentations from graduate programs at other institutions that often spark interest in students – it would be great to be able to offer graduate programs at Columbia as an option

Garnett Kilberg-Cohen, Creative Writing:
- Agrees with the idea of identifying the core as the Columbia Core
- Noted that, while it would be good to offer more graduate programs at Columbia, they could be promoted more to undergraduates outside the college than to our own students – it’s often beneficial to go to a different institution for graduate education
- Distinctions between graduate and undergraduate courses should be based on more than different levels of academic rigor; undergraduate courses should have more of a face-to-face component

Teresa Puente, Journalism:
- Encouraged following best-practice standards in developing online courses

Lott Hill, Center for Innovation in Teaching Excellence (CIITE) [direct follow-up]:
- CIITE is actively working on developing those standards

Joan Giroux, Art + Design:
- With regard to online education, there needs to be collaboration between faculty across disciplines, particularly in terms of teaching students how to effectively budget/market themselves
- Implementation of online education will require faculty considerations such as workload releases

Stan Wearden:
- Stressed that online education at Columbia College Chicago is something that needs to be centralized

Beatrix Budy:
- Praised CIITE for its work, but noted that teaching excellence needs to be celebrated more widely (and compensated more appropriately)
Stan Wearden [direct response]:
• Agreed completely – there need to be events specifically designed to celebrate teaching excellence, professional development initiatives; suggested that there could be a week devoted to honoring excellence in teaching

Brian Shaw, Theatre:
• Fostering collaboration and reducing academic silos takes time and resources; touted the value of “accident” (i.e., creating opportunities for chance interactions between faculty that might bear fruit)

Stan Wearden [direct response]:
• Proposed allocating space (and possibly grant resources) for faculty interdisciplinarity and collaboration

Jeff Kelly Lowenstein, Journalism:
• Talks to his students at the beginning of the first class about their goals, what they want; responses can be synthesized and then compared with where the class is going over the course of the semester
• Progress can be measured from students’ point of view as well as those of the instructor, or department, or school, or college
• Agreed that faculty success as well as student success needs to be widely celebrated

Joan Giroux:
• Largely because of the college’s tenure/tenure-track faculty structure, there seems to be some confusion about Columbia’s status as a teaching institution (as opposed to a research institution) – there needs to be a clear, college-wide message that that’s what Columbia is

Stan Wearden [direct response]:
• Research that adds to the body of knowledge is important, but the college needs to find a balance between teaching and scholarship
• We also need to find better ways to evaluate teaching

Lott Hill:
• Discussed Columbia’s past initiatives related to SOTL (the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning), and the fluctuating levels of administrative support those efforts received
• There’s a disconnect between faculty and upper levels, from department chairs all the way to the top
• Faculty initiatives need support at the department and school levels

Rachel Ready, Advertising & Public Relations:
• The Portfolio Center needs more visibility, as do the college’s internship opportunities

Stan Wearden [direct response]:
• The college needs to emphasize portfolios, not only as a student development tool but as a means of assessment as well – a student’s portfolio can demonstrate how well learning outcomes are being fulfilled
Regina Wellner, Humanities, History & Social Sciences:
• We need to talk about shared goals with both students and faculty
• Discussed how, for her own classes, she uses knowledge of her students’ majors to help shape assignments