

## **Response of the Program Development Framing Team**

### 1. College's Purpose:

From the viewpoint of program development, and more specifically undergraduate program development, the College's mission statement seems to adequately describe our True North. That is to say that the College's primary purpose in regard to undergraduate program development is:

- To provide undergraduate education programs grounded in the liberal arts and sciences that are designed to prepare students for future careers and lives of continued learning.

### 2. College's core values:

The principle values that inform the sense of purpose defined above include the following:

- The nurturing atmosphere of the College;
- Providing programs of academic quality that include a focus on essential content and delivery of the educational material, and a close connection between course content and potential relevance;
- Motivating faculty to be highly effective instructors;
- Serving as a "college of opportunity" for many students while at the same time becoming more of a "college of choice" for others as the academic program develops and more majors become available for students;
- Helping many students to "find themselves."

### 3. Key Opportunities:

There are several areas of opportunity for expansion of the academic program over the next ten year period. It is recommended that the College maintain a balanced growth of the academic program so that certain current programs are more adequately staffed, while at the same time adding selected new academic programs that serve to round out current academic disciplines. Example programs could include, but are not limited to the following:

- Mathematics and Sciences – a major in chemistry;
- Humanities – majors in performing arts and visual arts;
- Social Sciences – majors in economics, sociology or social work;
- Professions and Applied Sciences – a major in media studies, a marketing emphasis within business, a computer science major, and additional licensure programs in educations such as: PreK, middle school licensure, math 7-12 and special education.

It is also suggested that the College look at the possibility of providing some degree of scholarship support that is tied to specific academic programs, much like the scholarships currently provided for the concert choir. This would allow programs to hold scholarship competitions; perhaps attract students who might not otherwise be interested in the College; and would provide a means of more closely engaging these students with their chosen academic programs.

In addition to new majors that might be developed over the next ten years, we may be approaching the time to begin taking a closer look at strengthening our current curriculum. Ideas for consideration could include, but not be limited to, some degree of globalization of the curriculum; the introduction of a thematic core curriculum; the expansion of international and travel studies programs; encouraging more interdisciplinary efforts; and providing students the opportunity to develop individualized curricula.

For the evening program, we should consider the addition of more on-line courses, expanding the awarding of prior experience credits, and considering other delivery schemes than the current eight-week module format on Monday and Thursday evenings.

While not directly related to program development, but directly related to improving the quality of all academic programs, it is recommended that the College look at moving the full-time teaching load from 15 hours per term to 12 hours by 2020, which is more in keeping with teaching loads at most liberal arts colleges. This would also allow the faculty to devote more time to faculty development and scholarly activity that could help to reinforce their overall teaching effectiveness.

#### 4. Key Challenges:

The key challenges identified with regard to expansion of the academic program include three major issues. These are budget limitations, limited physical facilities to accommodate current as well as new academic programs, and lack of current expertise on campus to accomplish some of the opportunities identified above.

#### 5. Methodology of Engaging Identified Key Opportunities and Overcoming Key Challenges:

The addition of new programs will in most instances require the addition of new faculty positions, and this must be balanced with the need to better staff some of our current programs as the College continues to grow in size. The addition of new faculty positions must be carried out in such a way that each addition can be adequately supported by the College's operating budget and on a continuing basis. Thus, it is assumed that new programs will be added at a somewhat slower rate than in the past ten-year period. Determinations of faculty positions needed to staff both current and new programs should be prioritized, but this may be easier said than done. While it is possible to prioritize the addition of new programs rather easily, the continued growth of the student body places demands upon current programs in ways that are not always quite so predictable. Consequently, the prioritization of new faculty positions, and thus program additions as well, may need to be reviewed annually and prioritizations established on a year-to-year basis.

One of the major challenges to the addition of new academic programs at the current time is the lack of facilities to accommodate new programs and new faculty. Currently every available faculty office on campus is being utilized to house full-time faculty and some of the spaces being used are less than ideal. Instructional space utilization also is nearing maximum capacity. Available lecture space varies from class period to class period and from day to day throughout the week but varies from as few as two free classrooms during two Tuesday-

Thursday periods to as many as six to nine available classrooms during several MWF class periods. The largest numbers of available classrooms are during the 8 o'clock and the three o'clock periods each day. While available classroom space will accommodate the addition of some new programs, these programs will also have to compete with the growth of additional sections of core courses as our student enrollment continues to grow. The only way to overcome this limitation is to eventually increase the number of available classrooms and offices on campus. The proposed renovation of Martin Hall, and the complete renovation of the Science Center will help to increase both available office and instructional space. These two projects could help to address some of the instructional space needs over the coming ten year period, but space within the Johnston Center will still be very limited. The construction of a new library and the renovation of the current library space for academic program use would probably address most of our current and future academic needs over the next ten year period.

While the renovation and construction projects identified above will eventually meet most of our classroom and office space needs, the lack of available office space is an immediate issue that must be addressed. To address office space needs over the next two or four year period the renovation of at one or more of the residences currently owned by the College will probably be required. There will also be a significant need for the construction of facilities better suited for certain programs such as dramatic arts. While current facilities, such as the Martin Hall auditorium are usable, they are very limited and certainly are not competitive with similar facilities at other institutions.

The growth of distance learning nationwide is an issue that must be addressed by the College, and soon. There is a growing interest in increasing the level of on-line learning available to students in the evening program as an option to stem the declining enrollment that has occurred over the past two or three years. While the College already possesses the technology needed to launch a significant number of on-line courses, the faculty expertise needed for this undertaking is woefully lacking. A strategy must be developed to provide development opportunities, as well as incentives for faculty to learn the methodology involved in distance learning.

It is also suggested that as the College continues to grow that study areas be identified, preferably in each academic building. These study areas should include Wi Fi access and both quiet areas and round tables so students can have group discussions when desired. Such areas could also be useful for evening students so they have a place to meet, study, or eat before or between classes.

## 6. Broad Goals:

The broad goals for development of the undergraduate academic program are to look at developing programs that will serve to "round out" all of the traditional areas of the arts and sciences as well as selected programs within the professions and applied sciences. It is further recommended that thorough needs analyses and projected costs be carefully studied before new program proposals are approved. The College should move cautiously in the addition of new programs in order to maintain a balance among faculty additions for new

programs, faculty additions required to adequate staff current programs, and other types of improvements that must be made in order to maintain and/or improve the quality of existing programs as well as our core curriculum.

While expressing some degree of caution in the rate of adding new programs, it is strongly recommended that the College be adaptable, that it should encourage creative thinking, and that it be receptive to new program ideas as we move forward.

#### 7. Financial Implications Associated with Goals:

As indicated above, the addition of new faculty positions, for both new as well as existing programs, must be carried out in such a way that each addition can be adequately supported by the College's operating budget and on a continuing basis. There must be a constant balance between income and program costs. It is anticipated that enrollment growth will account for most of the funds needed to add new programs as well as improve staffing of certain current programs. It is also anticipated that the addition of new programs will contribute to the continued growth of the student body as we attract students who, without these programs, would not be attracted to the College. Finally, it is also recommended that where possible, grant funds be sought to help develop and support certain programs, both current and proposed new programs.