DEAN'S REPORT TO THE FACULTY
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Emily Chamlee-Wright
Provost and Dean of the College

It is my pleasure to submit this report to the Washington College faculty. Below are brief updates from the Curriculum Committee, the Planning Committee, and the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion, a list of important dates, and a summary of recent faculty accomplishments.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee has begun the process of reviewing Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) reports. I will note that we are learning a lot from this first cycle of SLOA reviews. In addition to learning about the varied ways departments are assessing student learning, we are gaining insight as to how we can leverage SLOA reports in a way that will inform the assessment of general education, without overburdening department chairs and faculty involved in the assessment process. We are capturing these insights so that we can give department chairs clear guidance moving forward. These insights will also inform the process that an assessment committee might adopt, assuming that the creation of such a committee is approved by the Faculty. Further, we have been honing our process so that the feedback departments receive is meaningful, while also manageable for the committee to provide.

Planning Committee

The Planning Committee has contacted Tactic Coordinators (people responsible for developing tactical plans for individual initiatives within the strategic plan), asking them to revise and update their tactical plans. Tactic Coordinators were offered two deadlines from which to choose. If they are seeking operating funds in the FY16 budget, revised and updated tactical plans are due March 16. If operating funds are not necessary, or if funding can wait until a future fiscal year, revised and updated tactical plans are due August 28.

The Planning Committee has also started its review of triennial Department Program Assessment and Planning (DPAP) reports. As with the SLOA reports, we are learning a great deal from this first cycle of reports. Not only are we learning about the strategic goals departments are developing, we are discovering ways to make the process clearer. For example, the Committee has found it helpful when departments identify clear points of intersection between their departmental plans and the College’s strategic plan, so we will be asking for that explicitly in future cycles. Working in small vetting groups, committee members have also developed a process for providing feedback to departments. We will continue to hone these processes as we review remaining DPAP reports.
Advisory Committee on Tenure & Promotion

T&P is in the throes of First-Year Reviews and will soon turn to Third-Year Review candidate files.

Important Dates

- Monday, March 16: Proposals for Faculty-Student Summer Collaborations Due (Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities)

Faculty Accomplishments

Kevin Brien's invited paper, "Internal Relations, the Concrete Universal, and Historical Materialism", was recently published in a Special Issue of the British journal Capital and Class on Marxism and the Philosophy of Internal Relations; 2015, Vol. 39 (1) 111-130.

Emily Chamlee-Wright’s edited volume Liberal Learning and the Art of Self-Governance has been published by Routledge. Included in this volume is a chapter titled, “Polycentricity and the Principles of Effective Co-Governance: What the Bloomington School can Teach Us,” co-authored by Emily Chamlee-Wright and Paul Aligica, Senior Research Fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. Also included in this volume is a chapter titled, “Developing the Art of Self-Governance: Teaching the Role of Place in Associative Life,” co-authored by Emily Chamlee-Wright, Adam Goodheart and John Seidel.

The book’s dedication page reads, “This volume is dedicated to the faculty at our institutions who create intellectual community, cultivate the habits of self-governance, and perform minor transformational miracles with our students every day.”

Elena Deanda published the short story “Parentesis” in the journal Ambitos Feministas 4 (2014).

Aaron Krochmal was an invited speaker as part of a month-long “mini-mester” course in Sensory Ecology at Lund University (Lund, Sweden). He delivered a day-long seminar entitled “From physics to phylogenetics: An integrative approach to the functions and origins of the facial pits of pitvipers” in which he addressed the optical, biochemical, physiological, and ecological aspects of the infrared vision of pitvipers. The course, now in its 20th year, included 50 Ph.D. students from the U.S., Europe, and Asia.

Ken Miller’s January 2015 book talk at New York City’s Fraunces Tavern Museum aired on C-Span 3’s American History TV, February 7th and 8th. The lecture is now available for streaming at www.c-span.org.
Rick Striner's essay "Lincoln and the Struggle to End Slavery" has just been published in the Lincoln Forum anthology "Exploring Lincoln: Great Historians Appraise Our Greatest President," published by Fordham University Press.

Michele Volansky served as a member of artistic selection board for the 2015 National Playwright's Conference (NPC) at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. The NPC is one of the premiere play developmental programs in America. Since its founding in 1965, NPC has developed over 600 new plays for the stage, launching the careers of many notable writers including: August Wilson, Wendy Wasserstein, Adam Rapp, John Patrick Shanley, Lee Blessing, John Guare, Gina Gionfriddo, and hundreds more. This is Volansky's third year participating.