

Liberal Arts 5-Year Plan, 2001-2006

WSU Tri-Cities
Submitted by Leonard Orr

Goals and Strategies in the Liberal Arts

OBJECTIVE: IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION AND THE DEPTH AND RELIABILITY OF OUR OFFERINGS

Goals and Strategies

We will become less reliant upon adjunct faculty members and WHETS (though this would mean offering fewer courses and not trying to cover as many subject areas). Unless this change is made, we cannot have very much control over the courses we offer, the times courses are scheduled, or guarantee from one semester to another (let alone year to year, or plan in the normal way with two-year or four-year course rotations). In addition to lacking control over the particular topics of the courses, the days, times, or availability of courses, adjunct faculty members cannot be expected to involve themselves in the general concerns of the campus and of the college, they are not attached in any way to the “home departments” in Pullman, and have sometimes departed precipitously, even after the beginning of a semester, leaving students hanging. As it becomes possible, then, we should try to *develop a group of permanent, full-time faculty members who can support the university and campus missions, and support the Vision Statement for the Liberal Arts*. We feel that increasing the number of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty is essential if we are to attract and retain more students and provide depth of offerings, continuity, and coherence.

We want to *encourage and promote academic excellence* at WSU-TC. An encouraging change occurred August 20th at a meeting in the Honors College in Pullman. Here we worked out an Honors curriculum that could be carried out entirely at the upper-division, and that would be identical throughout the state. This change in the Honors courses and requirements for the Honors certificate still must go through the Faculty Senate committees, but since it involved the Honors Council and representatives from the branches and several deans, we believe it will go through and we would at least have the ability to offer an Honors track leading to certification, if we have the faculty who are willing and able to teach the five Honors courses that are required. This was very encouraging, both because it would lead to attracting higher-achieving students who might otherwise transfer from to other universities where Honors courses were available, and because it indicates a new willingness on the part of the main campus to change even their long-standing programs so that they can work statewide. David Sonnenfeld has been investigating possibilities for developing a local unit of a national student honors society for Liberal Arts and other students at WSU-TC, and that is also part of this effort to create the environment for academic excellence. Developing and

promoting subject B.A.s (described below) also will contribute to the promotion of subject-based academic excellence at WSU-TC. As part of this, we will explore the offering of subject-based theory and methods courses on the Tri-Cities campus, increased opportunities for undergraduate student research, and options for undergraduate student theses. We also will encourage the use of scholarships to aid in recruiting honors or high-achieving Liberal Arts students from local and regional community colleges.

OBJECTIVE: DEVELOP PROGRAMS AND LONG-TERM FACULTY TO SUPPORT THE VISION STATEMENT IN THE LIBERAL ARTS

Goals and Strategies

Of course, the plan should be to hire faculty members, in whatever disciplines, who would contribute to the **areas of excellence** we have outlined in the Vision Statement:

- (1) *American and global diversity and change* (i.e., Anthropology, Comparative American Cultures, History, Sociology, English, Psychology)
- (2) *Studies of science, technology, and environment* (i.e., Sociology, History of Technology, History of Science, Literature and Environment, Electronic Media and Culture)
- (3) *Community development and social services* (i.e., Human Development, Sociology, Social Work, Rural Sociology, Psychology)

It is important that we not just think in terms of the Tri-Cities, although that is our primary focus, but regionally, statewide, and even globally, as we develop the programs that support the Vision Statement. We endorse President Rawlins' vision of developing "world class, face-to-face" programs even at the branch campuses. We see the following as areas we could develop here, realistically speaking, with a relatively small group of flexible and dedicated full-time faculty members, the exchange of a few courses with the other campuses, and a smaller group of the best adjuncts:

In support of our first area of excellence, *American and global diversity and change*, we will develop a minor or an area of concentration in **Latino/Latina Studies**. Our new faculty member in Comparative American Cultures, Dr. Yolanda Flores Nieman, is in the process of developing a curriculum for this concentration, and she will be drawing upon leaders of the Hispanic community and other resources in developing these courses, as well as our regular faculty members and adjuncts. We hope to develop a Spanish language immersion course in support of this program. This will not only be an exciting new area within Liberal Arts, but this will help bring to reality the stated goal of making this campus a Hispanic-serving institution. We have started developing courses in **migration and immigration studies**. For example, Dr. Brigit Farley, our senior faculty member in History, is developing a course in migration and immigration, along with our Sociology faculty member, Dr. David Sonnenfeld. Our new faculty member in History, Dr. Robert Bauman, will be offering a course in American Roots: Immigration, Migration, and Ethnic Identity beginning Spring, 2002. In addition to being a member of the Department of Sociology, David Sonnenfeld also participates in the WSU system-wide **Asia Program**, including his course Human Issues in International Development. This is relevant to the Tri-Cities due to the area's growing Asian and Asian-American population. We are also involved with the new initiative within

Liberal Arts to develop a major and/or minor in **Global/International Studies**. The Hanford site and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) attract scientists and engineers from around the world, together with their families; part of PNNL's mission includes consulting and cooperative work around the world. These local-global connections result in a very diverse community setting, and afford excellent opportunities for growth in this area of the Liberal Arts at WSU-TC.

In support of our second area of excellence, *Studies of science, technology, and environment*, we will develop **Electronic Media and Culture** as either a major or minor area of concentration in the Liberal Arts (under the administrative rubric of the General Studies program). We have added to our faculty in English Dr. Amanda Espinosa-Aguilar, who is currently working with Pullman and Vancouver to develop the curriculum for the EMC here; we expect to begin courses in this area beginning with the Spring, 2002, semester. This is an interdisciplinary field of study with courses drawn from English, History, Computer Science, MIS, and other departments and colleges. We are also working the **interdisciplinary Environmental Studies** initiative at this campus, involving Liberal Arts, Science, Engineering, and Education. In Liberal Arts, already we regularly offer courses in Society and Technology, and Society and Environment. Possible new courses include Literature and the Environment (English faculty member Leonard Orr can offer this, and may offer such courses as Ecological Issues and American Nature Writing). We would like to develop courses in History of Science or History of Technology. There is also a WSU system-wide initiative exploring the development of a graduate school of the Environment, and we would be in a strong position to contribute to that effort.

In support of our third area of excellence, *Community development and social services*, we will develop **Human Services** as an area of concentration (with the cooperation of Human Development, Business, Sociology/Social Work, Rural Sociology, Psychology, and Education). Programming in this area would address long-expressed student and employer interests for liberal arts training in the broad area of social services. This is in keeping with several local demographic trends: the area's general urban growth; the growth of the Tri-Cities as a retirement center; continued in-migration into the area of an ethnically diverse population, many initially for agricultural employment. All of these social dynamics place strong demands for provision of medical, social, and psychological services in the area. To this end, we have had several exploratory meetings with the various departments and faculty members who might be involved in creating a supportable and desirable program at this campus, sharing faculty resources with Pullman and Vancouver. Things were held up because of the uncertainty over the budget through the Spring and Summer, but now we will return to these plans and see how we can offer this. We will also see how this will work with the Nursing program at this campus.

Probably the most significant change, however, would be in the development of discipline-specific B.A.s (as opposed to General Studies Humanities or General Studies Social Sciences). Thanks to changes in the HEC Board rules, it is now far easier for the main campus to extend an existing degree to the branch campus. Because of this, we had, in recent weeks, two successful meetings with the deans and all of the Liberal Arts department chairs, and we have had a generally good reaction. We have gotten the approval of the chairs and the Liberal Arts dean to apply to have the B.A. in English and History, and the B.A. and

B.S. in Psychology, extended to this campus. We need to go through the Faculty Senate committees and the HEC Board, but the college believes it will receive approval, since it is backed by the college.

Looking beyond the B.A. and B.S., we would like to see a graduate degree other than those in Education for the Liberal Arts students. We believe that when we have increased our numbers slightly, and when we work towards developing selectively our areas of strength and connecting with the needs of our students regionally and statewide, we can create the necessary core of graduate level courses. We will work towards having a role in the development of the statewide **Interdisciplinary M.A. in Liberal Arts** (currently being studied in the College of Liberal Arts).

OBJECTIVE: INCREASE OUR OUTREACH TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE STATE

Goals and Strategies

We need a mechanism for getting and staying in touch with what the community needs are, for developing relationships with potential supporters of our programs and goals, and for hearing the ideas and fresh insights of representative groups from throughout the region. Following the model of the Business college here, *we would form a **Liberal Arts Advisory Board*** for Tri-Cities campus. We are particularly interested in improving WSU-TC's relationship with the diverse, multi-cultural population of the local area. Yolanda Flores Niemann efforts in Latina/Latino outreach (described above) are a critical part of this effort.

We will try to increase our role in the community, including the sponsorship of the arts and popular, scholarly lectures and forums that will bring the general public to the campus. This is in keeping with President Rawlins' vision of the university serving a critical social role in the greater community of which it is a part.

We need better techniques for reaching potential students throughout our region and the state, beyond the limitations of physical classrooms and WHETS. We would like to *develop new teaching technologies as normal components of classes (both regular classes and on-line classes, such as video-conferencing, and various asynchronous, on-line teaching platforms)*. We must have a way to learn about possible technology available, or soon to be available and to evaluate these various technologies for our courses here (perhaps through a permanent Teaching Technology Committee with a representative from each academic area and IT), and to bring to this campus training as needed from CTLLT. We really need a person dedicated to course and teaching support in order to accomplish these goals.

We will explore ways to improve our working relationship with Liberal Arts faculty and programs in other 2- and 4-year colleges in the area.

OBJECTIVE: PROVIDE THE ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES TO ALLOW LIBERAL ARTS FACULTY TO TEACH, CARRY OUT THEIR RESEARCH, AND DEVELOP PROFESSIONALLY

Goals and Strategies

We must *maintain at least the present level of funding for travel* to conferences and for research purposes, as well as the separate travel money for trips to Pullman or Vancouver. We do not have much in the way of library resources, except interlibrary loan and databases, and most journals in the Liberal Arts disciplines are not accessible in full-text versions through JSTOR, PROQUEST, and the other library subscription sources. We do not have graduate students at this campus, so we need *at least 20 hours per week of research assistance* (30 hours per week was generously given to us in the last eight weeks of the Fall, 2000 semester, and the faculty members had need for additional research time). Otherwise, it is very difficult for us to recruit and retain the excellent and versatile faculty members we would like on this campus, and it is difficult for them to earn tenure and promotion in their departments.

OBJECTIVE: INSTILL IN THE STUDENTS A STRONGER IDENTITY WITH THE COLLEGE AND WITH THEIR AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

Goals and Strategies

The most effective way to achieve this sense of identification would be the extension of existing Liberal Arts Bachelor's degrees from the main campus to our campus. We hope we will be able to move in this direction very shortly in three disciplines: English, History, and Psychology (using the same departmental major requirements as Pullman). We believe this will have the greatest impact on our students and our recruiting.

Externally, we should have signs on the campus pointing to "colleges." Now that the office moves have been finished, the West Building should have a sign indicating the Colleges of Liberal Arts, the College of Education, the College of Computer Science and Engineering, and the College of Science; the CIC should have a sign indicating it is the home of the College of Business. Inside the buildings, there should be signs pointing to the hallways by college (not paper signs). The certificates, since they will now be legitimate, should be centralized in their printing, distribution, and any costs; there should be a uniform and stately design. Those certificates that might be suitable for people who have finished degrees (such as the Professional Writing Certificate) should be publicized and marketed appropriately (not just two brochures on bulletin boards in the West building). We should also publicize on the university web-site and elsewhere the certificates for the major areas of concentration under the General Studies rubric, so that the students and potential students will realize that they can have certificates that say History, English, Sociology, and so on. As much as possible we wish to use the term Liberal Arts rather than General Studies, recognizing General Studies is an administrative program within the College of Liberal Arts, it is not itself a College (this includes changing the way courses are listed in the brochures and on the web-pages, still very confusing and difficult to use).

Legislative Initiatives for Liberal Arts Strategic Plan, 2001-2006

Institute for Migration and Immigration Studies

We propose the development of an Institute for Migration and Immigration Studies. Located in a geographic area that includes substantial numbers of immigrants from several Latin American, Asian, and European countries, WSU-TC is uniquely situated to attract scholars interested in these fields. In the case of Latinas/os, many of the area's residents also migrate as they follow the harvest. The proposed Institute will include scholarship from several perspectives, including social science, humanities, health, and human and environmental resources and impacts.

WSU-TC currently has several faculty members in various disciplines who can contribute to such an Institute. Included among these disciplines are most of the faculty members in Liberal Arts. For example, Flores Niemann's work focuses on teaching and research relative to Latinas/os, Sonnenfeld's work includes interest in Asian American/Pacific islander groups, Farley's scholarship includes Russian/Ukrainian Studies, and Strand's research encompasses field work with children and parents in the Latina/o community. Bauman, Espinosa-Aguilar, and Orr have taught classes related to immigration studies in History and English. While Liberal Arts faculty focus on humanities and social science topics, the faculty in the physical sciences will also be instrumental to an Institute for Migration and Immigration Studies. Some of these faculty members study the effects of chemicals on the environment, water supply & demand concerns, and other matters pertaining to natural resources. The newly formed nursing program at WSU-TC will also add a dimension on the study of health issues for immigrants and migrants. Additionally, Cooperative Extension Faculty work with members of the immigrant community on a day-to-day basis, and would also be significant contributors to the Institute. In addition to faculty resources, the laboratories and scientists associated with the Hanford Project would contribute to the Institute, as will off-site WSU laboratories such as the site in Prosser.

The development of an Institute for Migration and Immigration Studies will facilitate the identification of the WSU-TC campus as a world-class center for scholarship in these areas. Such a Center will attract visiting scholars as well as faculty who wish to become a part of this world-class environment for these studies. This proposed Institute would also attract post-doctoral scholars who wish to work with scholars in these fields. Because WSU-TC already has so many of the resources needed for the establishment of an Institute for Migration and Immigration Studies, the development of this center would allow the campus to "package" itself in a unique and attractive manner without the immediate addition of monetary resources.

Funding for the Institute would need to cover monies for added faculty members (including a demographer) and computer databases. We would also require a grant-writer to identify and apply for the some of the numerous grants available for the study of migration and immigration.

Studies in Globalization, Technology & the Environment

The Tri-Cities, Washington, area first catapulted into global significance in the 1940s and '50s, as home of the Hanford nuclear works, location of one of the first, full-scale nuclear reactors ever built; home of eight plutonium-producing nuclear reactors – more operating in one place at the same time than anywhere else on earth; and location where the plutonium used in manufacturing the bomb used by the USA in Nagasaki, Japan, was manufactured. The Hanford site is well known around the world, including in Russia, Eastern Europe, and Japan. Today at the turn of the 21st century, the Tri-Cities has evolved into a highly active, international scientific community, with ongoing world-class research at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, operated by Battelle, Inc., for the US Dept. of Energy; and with billions of dollars per year being spent by a variety of multinational contractors in development of scientific & technological capacity to clean-up an important part of the "cold-war legacy": high- and low-level nuclear wastes, stored temporarily in very large tanks on the Hanford site.

Washington State University, Tri-Cities, in cooperation with the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and locally-based international scientific & engineering firms, is developing a world-class program in Studies in Globalization, Technology and the Environment. This effort will be broadly multi-disciplinary, involving faculty and student researchers in the social sciences, humanities, sciences, and engineering. It will make use of unique historical archives contained in the joint Washington State University, Tri-Cities/Pacific Northwest National Laboratory "Consolidated Information Center" Library, as well as locally housed US DOE archives. The program will focus on historical and contemporary studies of linkages between processes of globalization, development of scientific, technological and environmental research; science and technology policy; and technology, environment and culture. A key characteristic of the Studies in Globalization, Technology & the Environment program will be its international character: participants will include visiting scholars, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows from around the world. International fellows resident at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory will have opportunities to participate & teach in the program as well. Planned emphases within the program include International Affairs; Science and Technology Policy; History of Science and Technology; Science and Technology Studies; Environmental Social Science; Humanities and the Environment. In addition to degree programs, the Program in Globalization, Technology and the Environment will sponsor monthly forums on topics of International Affairs, Science, Technology & the Environment of interest to the general public.

The Studies in Globalization, Technology, and the Environment program at Washington State University, Tri-Cities, will be conducted in cooperation with a variety of existing programs and initiatives at Washington State University, including graduate

programs in Environmental History, Environmental Sociology, International Affairs, Environmental Science and Regional Planning; the International Program; and university-wide initiatives in environmental studies, and global/ international studies.