How Temple Spent Our Summer ‘Vacation’

Many faculty do not visit Temple’s campus during the Summer, though that hardly means we’re on vacation from May to August. Those not teaching summer school are busy drafting articles and books and/or putting together grant proposals and/or developing new courses and/or revising old ones. Those of us teaching summer school do what they can to squeeze those activities in. Your Humble Editor labored to find time for his research in the midst of teaching and administrative work as he piloted a Study Abroad program in London with the indispensable help of our Education Abroad Office and my colleague, Shannon Miller. It was a wonderful six weeks, and I was very lucky in the students I had. But I imagine you are less interested in a verbal slide-show of my travels—by the way, I highly recommend the London Review of Books Café near the British Museum — than in the important decisions made and initiatives launched by Temple this summer.

Your interest may be sharpened by the fact that many of these decisions were made with a conspicuous and troubling lack of faculty consultation.

Setting Standards for Online Learning at Temple

Distance Learning Standards/Guidelines (DLS/G) Committee Report by Vicki McGarvey, Vice Provost for University College and Catherine Schifter, Associate Professor, Psychological, Organizational, and Leadership Studies

Since Temple University is moving further into the realm of offering and accepting distance/online courses for academic credit, having quality guidelines for review committees is essential. The DSL/G Committee was also asked to develop guidelines and criteria for faculty teaching online courses and students participating in them. A more detailed description of the committee’s charge can be found here. The committee was made up of faculty and administrators and was co-chaired by Associate Professor Catherine Schifter of the College of Education and Vice Provost Vicki McGarvey of the University College. The committee’s membership can be found at the end of this report.

First, we need to define a few terms before going further. At Temple, we offer courses using several technology-mediated methods, other than the traditional face-to-face course using a smart classroom with technology. We offer “distance” courses, which we have defined as those delivered through two-way videoconferencing, transmitting a live video/audio feed from one classroom where the teacher is physically present to another classroom where there are students present. With the two-way transmission, students in both classrooms can interact in real time with each other and the instruc-

To the Editor...

As someone who was involved in developing the General Education curriculum and who teaches in the program as a faculty member in the Department of Religion, I read with interest “An Interview with Provost Hai-Lung Dai, Part One” in the last issue of the Herald for this academic year. I am responding to the Provost’s comments about our diversity requirement and the value of language study with which I respectfully disagree.

Perhaps Provost Dai is familiar with the maxim attributed to Max Müller that is at the foundation of the academic study of religion: “If you know one religion you don't know any”; it is reflected in his statement, “…if I learn Christianity, I may miss the Islamic philosophy.” But he should not assume this is a problem in General Education. This dilemma never comes up because those courses don’t focus exclusively on one religion. All of our General Education courses are designed to teach not only about multiple religions, but also encourage students to understand that no religion is monolithic, and we may find even more differences within traditions than...
having in getting a major grant submitted, and it was clear that rather than the well-oiled machine you referred to above, it was a rusty machine that wasn’t working properly. Do you think there is merit to these complaints, and, if so, what do we need to do? You’re a world-renowned researcher yourself, so I figure you would feel these problems keenly. What do we need to do to improve the research infrastructure at Temple?

HLD: Building research has been the goal at Temple for a while; this is nothing new. You have been here 11 years, and you’ve seen how we’ve wanted to build research. There are different parts of building research. One part is to help faculty get sponsored research dollars. In this line of thinking, there has been a school of thought that we should actively go to the federal government to get pork barrel money or go to industry. These activities are certainly very important. At the same time these activities can only be successful or meaningful when you already have a strong faculty. I see some other universities, particularly newer ones, taking this path to get special federal appropriations. But pork barrels do not go forever, and when it run out, that was it. On the other hand, the more competitive universities, what they do is first to build a strong faculty. How do you have a strong faculty? Recruit and then support them. Those are the two ways.

SN: As you were recruited from Penn to come here.

HLD: I've made many thoughts on this. Let me say three, so that I don’t forget. First, we have to realize that Temple is relatively poor compared to our peer institutions. So we have to focus on how to develop more resources. I could give you an hour of discussion about how to develop new resources. The second thing we have to do is figure out how to best use the resources we do have. We have to ask: What is the most reasonable model for funding graduate education? I’ll give you an example for consideration—I already started this discussion in the CLA Collegial Assembly. Again, as I said, I’m going to stick my neck out to initiate a discussion. Penn, back in the 1990s, I remembered, at that time, the chemistry department had 200 graduate students with $15 million in external funding, and the English department also had 200 graduate students with no external funding, but the time to graduate in English was 11 years. I was on the advisory committee to the dean at that time, an excellent Dean, Rosemary Stevens, a very purposeful and tough person. I don’t mind you including her name here, because I really admire her. In discussions in her advisory committee, I recognized that in the sciences, we have a student-advisor apprenticeship relationship, very different from that in humanities. The student works for me; we publish together; and his/her success is my success and vice versa. But in English, it’s different. You as faculty sit on the committee; you hear the report; they do their own theses and publish on their own. The more students you have, the more burden and more workload. So what Penn did was they consolidated their support focused on 50 well-funded students instead of 200. The result is you get better students, they finish more quickly—they now average 5-6 years. And when they finish, because they are more focused on their studies, they are more competitive on the job market. The new model has many benefits. So I think it’s time for us to look at what can be the best use of our available resources. Now I come to the third point—Why can’t we appoint grad students as grad adjuncts? Or grad adjuncts? This is my guess: It has to do with the concerns of unions.

SN: I’ve talked with the President of TUGSA about the TUGSA contract, and that there’s a mistaken sense that everybody on the contract work exactly the same number of hours and they’d grieve if anybody was assigned less than the maximum. I don’t think—

HLD: —I’ll give you another example. We don’t have to talk about details, but I’ll give you another example. When I moved from Penn to here, I had several students who were already at an advanced stage of candidacy, so they’d be getting Penn degrees. But they were doing experiments in the laboratories at Temple. So, naturally, I wanted Temple to pay through my grants from Temple, but I couldn’t because the union rules say they have to be Temple students before I can pay them. And even though I wasn’t exploiting the labor... So what was the end result? I had to ship my grant money to Penn to pay them, and then Penn got to charge the overhead, and so I lost money and Temple lost the grant money... Penn has no problem about where my students do their research as long as they get paid. They don’t care where they get their checks from. But we cannot issue payment to students who are not registered as Temple students.

Conversations with Dai continued from page 1

Provost Hai-Lung Dai

Unions and The Role of Chairs

SN: I think sorting out the differences between your position on unions and mine might take a while—

Conversations with Dai continued on page 7
Mourning a Colleague: Ben Kohl (1954-2013)

What follows is a tribute to Professor Ben Kohl of Geography and Urban Studies, written by Prof. Melissa Gilbert, chair of GUS. I was blessed to be Ben's friend, and so I know that I am not the only person who will miss his sharp mind, ready wit, and big heart—and his commitment to making Temple, Bolivia, and all the other worlds he inhabited more humane places.

Ben’s sudden passing has spurred me to see if The Faculty Herald might not be a place where we can properly honor all of our departed colleagues in a timely fashion. Unfortunately, my first attempts to find a dependable source of this information have not been successful. But I am going to keep trying. If you have any suggestions about how to go about this, please let me know (swenman@temple.edu).

I am grateful to Prof. Gilbert for granting The Herald permission to print her tribute to Ben.

The Department of Geography and Urban Studies at Temple University is greatly saddened by the sudden death of our friend and colleague, Professor Ben Kohl. Ben died July 25 in Philadelphia of a heart attack. Many of you know Ben through his contributions to Latin American studies, international development, and urban studies across the disciplines of Planning, Geography, Anthropology, Politics, and Sociology. Ben was a phenomenal teacher, colleague, mentor, and friend. He cared deeply about students and was extremely supportive of junior faculty. Ben’s commitment to social justice permeated all aspects of his life and it is difficult to imagine the department without him.

Ben, along with his wife Linda Farthing, was one of the foremost experts on Bolivia and provided critical, rigorous, and creative work on many important debates over neoliberal governance, conflicts over natural resources, drug policy and social movements. He received his undergraduate degree in Anthropology from San Francisco State University in 1986, his MA in Engineering and Policy, Technology and Human Affairs from Washington University in 1992, and his PhD in City and Regional Planning from Cornell University in 1999. Ben and Linda moved to Bolivia in the 1980s and for the past 30 years have been living between La Paz and the US. Ben joined the department at Temple in 2001. Ben and Linda published From the Mines to the Streets: A Bolivian Activist’s Life (with Felix Muruchi, 2011, University of Texas, Austin) and Impasse in Bolivia: Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance (2006, Zed Books, London). They have a forthcoming book about Evo Morales’ government and the process of change in Bolivia that will be published by the University of Texas Press. Information about Ben’s scholarship and publications can be seen on his website.

Ben’s contributions to the Department and Temple University are innumerable. He was most passionate about students—he served as Undergraduate Chair for four years and was recently serving as Graduate Chair. Ben made substantial and critical contributions to the curriculum. He was to his core an educator with the goal of challenging and empowering students. He was also generous with his time and support of his colleagues. Ben was unfailingly encouraging of junior scholars and saw one of his key roles to create an environment where they could flourish. Ben’s kindness, generosity, integrity, wit, infectious laugh and willingness to speak truth to power will be greatly missed.

Ben is survived by Linda, their children Minka and Maya with whom he was very close and extremely proud, and his extended family. In lieu of flowers, family ask that you consider making a donation to 20/20 Scholarships in memory of Professor Kohl. The 20/20 Scholarships provide assistance to Temple University students from the North Philadelphia neighborhoods surrounding Temple University.

To do so, click here, and select the "Other" option under Giving Information. Then type “20/20 Scholarships” into the text box. You may indicate that your gift is in memory of Professor Kohl by selecting that option below the text box and completing the form.

Checks made payable to Temple University with “Ben Kohl” in the memo line may be mailed to the CLA Development Office, 1234 Anderson Hall, 1114 West Berks Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122-6090.

In honor of Ben’s contributions, the Department of Geography and Urban Studies has established an annual Benjamin H. Kohl Social Justice Lecture. The first annual lecture will be held on October 21 from 1-3:30PM at the 1810 Conference Suite at 1810 Liacouras Walk. Felix Muruchi Poma’s presentation is entitled, “Bolivia's Process of Social Change.”

Professor Benjamin Kohl, 1954-2013
A Conversation About General Education at Temple: Past, Present, and Future

 Five years after its launch, Temple’s General Education program recently went through an External Review as part of a larger assessment. Of course, faculty are already heavily involved in Gen Ed—overseeing it through the General Education Executive Committee (GEEC) and teaching so many courses in it. But it’s crucial that more of us get informed about and get involved in the discussion about this crucial program since I think some consequential changes are in the offing that will affect all of our students and faculty. On September 23, I sat down with down with a group of administrators and faculty at the heart of Gen Ed: Peter Jones (Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Professor, Criminal Justice); Istvan Varkonyi (Director of Gen Ed and Associate Professor, German); Julie Phillips (Associate Director of General Education); Deborah Stull (member of the GEEC and Assistant Professor of Biology); Vallorie Peridier (member of the GEEC and Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering).

I am very grateful to these colleagues for engaging in this discussion, which covered the following topics:

The External Review: Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Resources: The Effects of RCM, Class Size, and Pedagogical Quality

The Staffing Mix in Gen Ed and Promoting Faculty Buy-In

Fostering Competencies, Gen Ed’s Relationship to Majors, and The Ends of Gen Ed

Gen Ed and Online Learning

The External Review: Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Steve Neurnan (SN): Thanks so much for assembling on such short notice. I really appreciate it. My hope here is to have a record of this conversation in The Herald because I think we’re at a really important moment in Gen Ed’s history, and I want to make sure that as much as possible that there’s a discussion about it in which the faculty play a substantive role along with the other stakeholders. So where I want to start is with the current review you all have been engaged in. The external review is only a piece of the various modalities you’re engaged in, but I want to begin with that. I understand that this is not a document that can be circulated, but could you offer me the highlights of the review—what it identified as the strengths of the program, where the reviewers think the program needs improvement and what resources the reviewers think that the program needs to build on those strengths and make those improvements?

Istvan Varkonyi (IV): I guess I’ll jump in. First and foremost, the report overall is quite positive. There are a lot of strengths within the system that we’ve got in place; they see it clearly as an incredible improvement over the Core curriculum. In essence, the tone is very positive. Here some of the positive things they point out: it’s much more streamlined with 34-36 credits; all of the areas seem to touch on key elements of building certain abilities and competencies; the course re-certification process, a major improvement over the Core; members of the GEEC can attest to, this is really our first go-round with re-certification. We had a pilot the previous year. This past year, 30-odd courses came in, and they were really eye-openers, revealing how certain departments and colleges are committed to Gen Ed philosophy and those competencies. Of course, there are always places where we can improve but the report on the whole is quite positive.

“...the report overall is quite positive. There are a lot of strengths within the system that we’ve got in place; they see it clearly as an incredible improvement over the Core curriculum.” - Istvan Varkonyi

One thing the report does say is that they were very impressed with our students. They did meet separately with our students. They met 15 students for about an hour, an hour and a half. The reviewers found them remarkably articulate. These were students from across the university; we did not hand-pick these students. We put out the call; the area coordinators and the GEEC Members went out to the instructors and asked them to make sure their students knew about this opportunity. These were students who voluntarily came to the door. They were all very positive, actually. They say they like the Gen Ed program; they want more of these skills-building courses. After all, they are the key stakeholders in all this; they are the audience.

Having said that, that doesn’t mean that there aren’t areas needing improvement. We need to be more articulate with the faculty about how we do assessment; we need to communicate this to the faculty. Assessment isn’t just one event but a series of things. We need more conversations about the overall picture of assessment.

The other thing that came up in the report that speaks to areas needing improvement has to do with the way Gen Ed was set up as a response to the Core. We saw the Core as a Chinese menu of courses all over the place, no logic. We now have these areas, but they have become silos that are a bit restrictive. For instance, take World Performances. That’s in the World Area, but this is clearly an Arts course as well. The reviewers argue for some porosity, some flexibility built in the program. So that a student could also satisfy an area also because of the content of the course. They wanted us to be a bit more creative and a bit more at ease now that the program is five years old, more mature. We can create more flexibility in these areas.

Deborah Stull (DS): The external reviewers noted that they were not singing out Temple’s program. Assessment is something that pretty much all Gen Ed programs find challenging.

Peter Jones (PJ): They did point out that the program’s requiring a re-certification was a real strength of Gen Ed. At many institutions, it’s left up to separate departments to do rather than the Gen Ed program; or if it is given to the program, they don’t have the ability to bring about any change even if the assessment suggests that things are not going well. They felt that we had gone a good job in the way we had designed the requirements for re-certification and the fact that, because Gen Ed is embedded in a faculty committee, it can say, “This isn’t good enough. We’re going to in another direction.”

I also want to echo what Istvan said about the reviewers’ comments on the students. They said that the students were remarkable, and each one of them said that they doubted they could get a group of students at their own institutions who could articulate the vision and philosophy of what their Gen Ed program was the way our students can. In fact, they said that we should do videos. “We went online to your Gen Ed program and not one of your students could be found, and you should have them on there because they really made an impression on us.”

Resources: The Effects of RCM, Class Size, and Pedagogical Quality

SN: This does get us to the question of resources. I wonder how you all are imagining the effect of Responsibility Centered Management on Gen Ed since the revenue initially stays with the academic units and you’re not defined as one of those and will be dependent upon the money pulsing back to the center. It’s rare to hear someone say, “We’re doing fine with what we have. In fact, please cut our budget.” But I do wonder how you imagine acting upon your own internal reviews and the external review, where are the pressure points where you might need additional resources.

Julie Phillips (JP): What we’re seeing in this vein is that some departments are trying to engage in credit grabbing.

We’re getting departments calling us and asking, “We see this or that department teaching a course. We think we could offer that. How do we get it on the schedule?”

We’re also seeing course caps increase. The external team acknowledged that this pressure was going to happen and that without adequate protection, Gen Ed was going to be at the mercy of the system. One of the recommendations they made that I thought was phenomenal was that they recognized that colleges and department shouldn’t be making unilateral decisions about course caps in the absence of pedagogical rationale or evidence and really encouraged the colleges and schools work with Gen Ed to make sure
How Temple Spent Our Summer ‘Vacation’

Editorial continued from page 1

This is not to say that the we were frozen out of all these discussions and decisions. For instance, many participated in the various committees involved in the Master Planning process; here, the Provost made great efforts to involve the faculty, though we have yet to see to what ultimate effect.

Howard Spodek of CLA was kind enough to share with me his notes on the subcommittee devoted to Temple’s need for space for teaching and research. These notes suggest that a real dialogue took place here, with faculty drawing on their irreplaceable experience as faculty to suggest how Temple could improve its use of space. This subcommittee also informed faculty about some of the bad effects of Temple’s space crunch—for instance, how it prevents some students from graduating in a timely fashion.

However, it pains me to observe that including faculty seems to have been more the exception than the rule this summer. This must change, and not just during the summer.

For instance, faculty were surprised to read in The Chronicle of Higher Education, that Temple had joined a consortium of universities called 2U, which will provide Temple students the opportunity to take online courses at other schools in the group and later the opportunity for us to offer online courses to students at other schools.

This decision was made with no consultation with the faculty. In addition, Provost Dai decided to change the Academic Calendar without any conversation with the faculty. Among its features is the option for four-week summer terms and a week-long Fall break the week before classes end, changes that have pedagogical implications that speak directly to the prerogatives of the faculty. Finally, and most importantly, the Provost declared that tenure files had to include eight outside evaluators, a decision he made without any discussion with the faculty. This doubles the number required by many colleges, and since the decision applied even to those who had already assembled their files, it left many chairs and promotion and tenure committees scrambling to find new evaluators and heightened the anxiety of already anxious candidates for tenure.

There is reason to hope for improvement. President Theobald and Provost Dai have been generous in making themselves available not only to the FSSC but also to the Faculty Senate, The Faculty Herald, collegial assemblies, and, through President’s Theobald’s lunches, a broad selection of faculty.

The same has been true of administrators involved in matters as diverse as De-centralized Budgeting and Student Feedback Forms. In a frank and constructive meeting on October 1st, the FSSC discussed with the Provost our concerns about the decisions made over the summer and together we broached how to better the communication between administrators and faculty, especially around such crucial matters as the tenure process. This way, administrators will have a better sense of the issues the faculty expects to be addressed on such committees. They are time consuming; they often seem to be consumed by the faculty’s having a substantive role in reviewing Deans. While both the President and Provost have gone on record supporting this idea, we have not yet seen proposals from the administration as to how this process will work and when it will be initiated. The second is the need for budget committees in each of the colleges and schools to address the opportunities and challenges of de-centralized budgeting. While my own college has such a committee, many do not; and it’s crucial that each academic unit have one and that it be stocked with faculty elected by their peers, not selected by the dean, be provided with the data it needs to give informed advice to deans; and have its advice taken seriously. The lack of these committees in many colleges points to a broader and deeper problem—that many of our collegial assemblies are still hamstrung by guidelines handed down by a prior administration that subjected bylaws to the oversight of university counsel and that increased the power of deans over these bodies. The FSSC has written to President Theobald asking that he repeal these centralizing and burdensome regulations so that collegial assemblies become what they should be—headed and run by the faculty themselves.

Of course, if we ask for more shared governance, we have to be ready to shoulder the responsibility if the administration satisfies our requests. When we leave empty seats on important committees like the Educational Policies and Procedures Committee, it sends a message to the faculty that we are not fully committed to shared governance. I understand why many of us are leery of serving on such committees. They are time-consuming; they often seem to have little or no effect; we receive little or no reward via merit for service, especially when compared to what we receive for research. But if we do not serve on these committees, we have no chance of making them consequential or reversing the dangerous trend away from shared governance that results in decisions being made without our input, decisions that shape our lives as scholars, teachers, and citizens of the Temple community.

I have recently been reading issues of The Faculty Herald from the 1980s and 1990s, courtesy of the archives handed to me by my predecessor, David Waldstreicher. There are certainly ways that Temple has improved since those days, while some things seem not to have changed at all—the front page from February 1996 that talks about the coming of Responsibility Centered Management and also addresses that perennial problem known as The Ambler Perplex. But the evidence seems clear that faculty were feistier back then in protecting their prerogatives. We could do with a bit more of that in 2013. I am not suggesting we all be available for meetings over the summer, but members of the Steering Committee, including the President, Vice President, and Secretary can be reached. During the summer, we all need to keep a weather eye out for what’s happening at Temple; and during the Fall and Spring, we need to be actively involved. Like Neil Young says, “Rust never sleeps,” and as this summer proved, neither does Temple. We faculty have to shake off our slumber, too, or we risk becoming rusty ourselves.
Setting Standards for Online Learning at Temple

Setting Standards continued from page 1

The committee recommends the following:

Next Steps

The committee recommends the following:

1.  The proposed “Guidelines for Use in Evaluating Distance Courses” be made available to all instructors who are developing online courses. The committee also recommends that a database of well-designed distance courses of various types be made available for use as models.
2.  The proposed “Updates to the Syllabus Policy” be recommended to the Provost to be included in the next revision of the Syllabus Policy.
3.  The recommendations for “Guidelines for Students taking Distance Courses”; “Guidelines for Faculty teaching Distance Courses”; and “Guidelines for approval of Distance Courses” be presented to the appropriate faculty and administrative bodies for further discussion and implementation.
4.  The University should articulate its policy regarding the internal assignment of financial liability for any violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Vicki McGarvey, Vice Provost for University College

Catherine Schifter, Associate Professor, Psychological, Organizational, and Leadership Studies
Conversations with Dai

HLD: See, this is the thing. Let’s go back to your issue—I actually find a lot of these suspicions are unnecessary. Again, I want to emphasize, I am here to work for the benefit of students and faculty. It’s not that I’m management and I want to squeeze you to please the stockholders. I don’t have these stockholders to please. Why are you suspecting me of working against your interests? I’m here only to make tough choices. You really need to write this—

SN: No, it’s in the interview, and I’m happy to print it. I think from where I sit as someone who has been pretty involved in the union, the longer history of Temple has been an antagonistic relationship between management and labor.


SN: I agree. You ask why don’t we trust you and why don’t we see that we’re on the same side, and we very much are. Recently, the faculty said, “Look, the governor is trying to cut us bad. And that’s bad for everybody.” And so the faculty and the administration joined forces, and the union agreed to a contract extension in which we really got no raise this year—merit is deferred—and the second year is pretty modest and that allowed Temple to keep its tuition flat. But when the administration announced triumphantly that we’re keeping tuition flat, nowhere did they acknowledge what the faculty had sacrificed. Or then there’s the example of taking the chairs out of the bargaining unit. I understand that’s the position that the administration holds. But how it gets done and how things happen, it always feels as if we’re always playing hardball with each other.

HLD: I’ll be very honest with you. Both President Theobald and I feel on the chair issue, we’ll do whatever the labor board will say. Here, we only ask for a clarification. That’s just a matter—it seems like the chair is doing managerial type of work if we consider the union situation. If the labor board says no that they’re not part of management, we’re not going to—

“...in an ideal world, the process that results in people in these quote-unquote ‘executive’ positions would be making the right decisions and then all the faculty needs to do is their scholarship and teach their courses well.”

SN: You’re not going to appeal.

HLD: We’re not going to. Basically, in the old model, I’ve already worked 5 and half years with chairs as it was. I find, yeah, it’s workable. Again, I think we should treat everyone as colleagues. Your chair is temporary. We are adamant that no chair serves more than 10 years. After 10 years, they are back as faculty. This is very different from General Motors, where you have the blue-collar and the white-collar.

SN: I’m very nervous about speaking for the union even though I’m on the Executive Committee. But I think our feeling is it that would be one thing if there had never been a bargaining unit, as is true of most universities. And chairs everywhere have always been appointed at the pleasure of the dean. We understand that. But since we have long had a bargaining unit at Temple, the way this is often read is, “Decentralized budgeting is here, and the deans want the chairs to dance to the tune they call.” That may be a misreading, but that’s the way a lot of members of the faculty read it.

HLD: This is the thing. If we say the chair dances to the tune of the dean, then we have to step back and think about this. If you look at my role as provost, I see that there is a mechanism that leads to my appointment. Once I am appointed, I see my role as your having asked me to execute our mission. I think everybody recognizes that access to excellence is our mission. And I see that as our mission as well. But in executing this mission, I need to launch new initiatives and make hard choices. This is what I see you all have asked me to do. My purview and mandate comes through your empowerment through the process. When I make choices, I have to turn down some requests. I have to direct resources in certain ways. You can call that management. To me, it is not really management. It’s leadership. Again I emphasize, in 2 or 3 years, or God knows, maybe next year, I may become a faculty member again. We are not in a for-profit organization. We have a very special situation as faculty rotate in and out of the ‘management.’ In the spirit of this, this particular move is just to clarify things. We only ask the board to make a clarification. What do you think?

SN: Obviously, you’re going to be making a case—

HLD: Because some of the chairs do ask, “Why am I in the bargaining unit? I’m making teaching assignments?” and I know that the teaching assignment is the most serious thing...[laughs]

SN: In my department that is mostly done by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. But while you will respect the decision of the Labor Relations Board, you do have a position on this: Something has changed in the role of the chairs where they are managers now.

HLD: Because they are indeed making workload assignments and distributing resources. And some of the chairs came to us and expressed confusion over their roles. Actually, as I just said, I worked in the current situation without much problem. But, on the other hand, it seems like for some of the chairs there is something of an identity crisis. So we just say, “You tell us from the standpoint of operations, is it A or B? I just want to call an apple an apple and an orange an orange.” I can tell you that President Theobald feels exactly the same way. We don’t have any grudges or whatever.

The Faculty’s voice and the need for communication

SN: You have suggested that the faculty need to raise their voice more. Is it your sense that the faculty is too timid or that the voices that you’re hearing are misunderstanding the situation? Is it either or both?

HLD: The first thing I want to say that I’m not blaming the faculty on this because in an ideal world, the process that results in people in these quote-unquote ‘executive’ positions would be making the right decisions and then all the faculty needs to do is their scholarship and teach their courses well. That’s the most ideal situation. I found the University of Virginia case extremely interesting. The president was fired and the faculty forced the board to reinstate her. That was a good example where the faculty exerted a large influence, and, of course, that’s where people see a true injustice being done. I would say if there are places where you see true injustice, I want to hear about it. I sit in this dungeon that they call garden level...[laughs]

SN: The garden level—that seems like a term that a real-estate agent might use...

HLD: When I get out and visit departments and colleges and talk to faculty, no matter how often I go, I’m not sure I have a real grasp of the temperature. So I think if the faculty really sees injustice, or something we didn’t do right, I really want to hear about it. Sometimes I like to hear a real discussion—like our discussion about Gen Ed. I hope the faculty doesn’t mind that I raise these issues. I’m not imposing these views on people. When I was a chair at Penn, I knew that when making senior hires, no matter which name I suggested, it would be killed by the faculty. No matter how great that person was. [laughs] So I know that people in quote-unquote ‘influential’ positions ought to be very careful in exercising their influence. The other part indeed is that I hope that the faculty will not be misinformed, that they understand the situation correctly.

We can schedule another appointment. This is an interesting discussion, and these are all sensitive issues. I think you’d find that other provosts might brush this aside.

SN: That’s why when I was asked about this interview I told people I was
between them—there is no one Christianity or Islamic philosophy for that matter.

This is obvious in the course I teach, Religion in Philadelphia, where we look at how various versions of religious traditions, including those of the Lenape Indians, the Quakers, Free Blacks, Jews, Catholics, followers of Father Divine, the Nation of Islam, Buddhism, and Santeria all combined to make Philadelphia the complex city it is today. This is something our students should surely want to understand as they live here and especially if they seek employment here after graduation.

“... But there is great danger to the triumphalist monolingualism that pervades this country’s ethos and that we perpetuate at our peril.”

This perspective also applies to the diversity courses that Provost Dai singled out for criticism. In our “Jews and Race” course, for example, students come to understand Jewish racial and ethnic diversity as they focus not only on the racialization of the Jews in Europe, but on the history and traditions of Jews of Asian and African descent that are vastly different from those we are familiar with in the United States. That course, as well as our other diversity offering, Race and Poverty in the Americas, is focused precisely on the goals that Provost Dai commends, to “learn the foundation for a harmonious society, the ethics and legal basis for tolerance and acceptance of difference in human society.” Courses like these teach those values and ideas, and that’s easily discoverable by looking at the syllabi and reading student papers and evaluations of those courses.

I would also suggest that Müller’s insight be applied to knowing one language, and see that as an argument for restoring a language requirement to the General Education program. Like Provost Dai, I know from my own experience the frustration of learning only the rudiments of languages I have studied in school, and the joys of translations that make those and other languages I don’t know more accessible to me. But there is great danger to the triumphalist monolingualism that pervades this country’s ethos and that we perpetuate at our peril.

And, I would argue, reading texts in translation has real limitations. I was pleased to see that a book by one of my favorite Israeli authors, A. B. Yehoshua, had recently come out in an English translation. But its title, Hesed Sefaradi, had been changed to The Retrospective. What a profound loss that is. But then the concept of hesed (often confused with the Christian idea of charity) isn’t any more translatable than the allusions the original title makes to the Latin folklore and common theme of European painting, “Cartas Romana,” that haunt this narrative. Also untranslatable is Sefaradi, which refers both to the Spanish Catholic milieu in which the story unfolds, and the tension between the Sephardi Jews who came originally from Spain and the global south and the Israeli Ashkenazi (northern European) ruling class. “Spanish Charity,” the literal translation, would never get these complex points across either, although that’s likely what you’d get if you put the Hebrew into a translation machine. No matter what you do, if you don’t know the original (two words you’d learn in the first year of study of the Hebrew language and nuances you’d be guided to by your language instructor), you would never comprehend the richness of those multiple meanings, and would consequently miss much of the depth of the work.

I know that our conversation about General Education will continue this coming academic year and I am glad the Herald is providing an outlet for it. The dialogue has great potential to build the harmonious society at Temple that the Provost and I both value.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Alpert
Professor of Religion and Chair, Herald Advisory Board

The Faculty Herald remains dedicated to promoting a dialogue with and among the faculty of Temple University and invites readers to write to the editor in response to anything in this or a previous issue, or on other topics of interest and import to Temple Faculty. New letters sent to the editor will be published on a prominent place on the Herald’s website (www.temple.edu/herald) within one or two weeks of the editor receiving them and will be included in the next issue of the Herald. Letters to the editor should be emailed to Steve Newman at snewman@temple.edu.

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**Setting Standards for Online Learning at Temple**

*Setting Standards continued from page 6*

**Distance Learning Standards Advisory Committee Membership**

February 2012

Eileen Aitken, Computer Services
John Bennett, Disability Resources
Gerard Brown, Center for the Arts (Tyler)
Stephanie Fiore, Teaching and Learning Center
Carly Haines, Distance Learning
Don Heller, School of Media and Communication
Alistair Howard, College of Liberal Arts
Darin Kapanjie, Fox School of Business and Management
Dominique Kliger, Distance Learning
Vicki McGarvey, University College (co-chair)
Judith Parker, College of Health Professions and Social Work
Beth Pfeiffer, College of Health Professions and Social Work
Robert Pred, Fox School of Business and Management
Norm Roessler, College of Liberal Arts
Catherine Schifter, College of Education (co-chair)
John Sorrentino, College of Liberal Arts
Sheri Stahler, Computer Services
Wendy Urban, College of Science and Technology

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**Attention All Faculty Interested in Gaming and Education!**

*By Catherine Schifter, Associate Professor, Dept. of Psychological, Organizational, & Leadership Studies in Education*

Games are not just for playing!! A group of your peers are interested in exploring how twenty-first century game environments can be used in higher education. We want to explore how people learn through these environments as well as, perhaps, learn through creating these environments. In this group so far are Paul LaFollette (CIS), Karen M. Turner (Journalism/SMC), Jay Lockenour (CLA), Catherine Schifter (Educ), and Norm Roessler (CLA), along with several graduate students from Sociology and Communications, and Rick Moffat from Computer Services. We’ve been talking with several others as well, but these are the folks who have so far explicitly said they would be interested in exploring these ideas further. Last summer, Educause challenged schools and colleges to explore how games fit and influence higher education and to establish a 3-5 year plan to explore and study these issues. We propose an ad hoc committee of interested faculty to meet next academic year to explore these opportunities and draft a white paper about the future of games at Temple University. We know there are pockets of game-based activities around the University now, and we suggest these can be more productive if concerted, leading to better support, all around. If you would be interested in collaborating with your colleagues from across schools and colleges on this exciting evolving area of study, contact me, Catherine Schifter at ccs@temple.edu, or any of us named above. We look forward to working with you.
Conversations with Dai

Conversations with Dai continued from page 7

really looking forward to it because you—

HLD—because I have a big mouth—.

SN: No, no. Somebody said to me, “He just pretends he’s being un-guarded.” But I don’t think that’s true. It’s the same thing with Pres. Theo-bald. If he didn’t know about something, he said he didn’t know. Which is refreshing, actually.

HLD: I think we are very fortunate to have President Theobald. He’s that type of leader, who as Confucius said, sets his mind on setting the fundamen-tals right.

[At this point, a member of the Provost’s staff knocked on the door to remind him of his next appointment.]

SN: You were talking about misinformation—

HLD: We have very different interpretations about why it went wrong with the last contract negotiation. This really boggles my mind.

SN: There are bound to be disagreements between the administration and the union and the administration and faculty. How do we acknowledge that without making it worse? President Theobald is coming to the Steering Committee today; you’re sitting down with me; I know Art Hochner, the President of TAUP, is reaching out to President Theobald. There are going to be pressures and disagreements, but surely there must be some way—

HLD: —That is very important communication we ought to have. From my point of view, if we can afford to give the faculty 10% increase, why wouldn’t I? If I did that today, President Theobald and Provost Dai would be the most beloved—

SN: And then we’d be broke, and the Board would—

HLD: —Right. But we all want to be loved and to make our colleagues happy.

SN: I’ll probably have some follow-up questions if you don’t mind about international education and other topics. . .

HLD: I’d be very open to that.

SN: Thanks again! ☺

Second Conversation with Dai

Because there were many topics we didn’t get to cover in my first conversa-tion with the Provost, he agreed to a second interview, which was conducted on June 18th. Again, I am grateful to Provost Dai for making time in his extraordinarily busy schedule to discuss these topics:

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Online Education at Temple
International Education: Branch Campuses, Collaborative PhDs, and Graduate Study Abroad in the Humanities
The Value and Cost of a Temple Education: Financial Aid, Tuition, and The Conwellian Mission
Faculty/Administration Communication and Graduate Education

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Online Education at Temple

HLD: So how was the response to the previous interview?

SN: Good, I think. I think that people were really interested in what you had to say.

HLD: At least one person wrote me. I find it interesting that I completely agree with what the person said. This is about priorities in Gen Ed. Probably I should have also added that often it’s not that I don’t see the value of some of the things we do. Like language. I certainly see the value of teaching a foreign language. The question is that if you have only 34 credit-hours, how are you going to spend them?

SN: I do think that someone will be writing to point out that GenEd courses already compare religions among other things. So that tells me that at least some people are reading it and that they want to continue the dialogue, which is always good.

I was hoping we could start off with one of the hot topics and the broader issues at stake, and that to have to do with MOOCs and distance and online education. In our prior discussions, you identified the two most important chal-lenges facing Temple as maintaining or even increasing educational quality and the second was increasing financial resources, and both of those seem to figure into MOOCs. I know that there is both a joint administrative/faculty task force putting together standards for courses of this type and a committee on the Board of Trustees. On one hand, a lot of these things seem very exciting and maybe even necessary. On the other hand, a lot of faculty are con-cerned that certain moves in online education might dilute educational quality and faculty oversight. As I asked President Theobald in my interview with him, he said that “the faculty are in charge of the curriculum.” But right now there is a great deal of pressure being exerted on the faculty’s curricular prerogatives, with, for instance, the American Council on Education accred-iting certain MOOCs and so forth. So I’m wondering if you could comment on any proposals for standards or initiatives on distance education and MOOCs in particular and how do you think we should proceed on these issues?

“The question is that if you have only 34 credit-hours, how are you going to spend them?”

HLD: I’ve been thinking - I heard stories that Stanford, MIT put out a few MOOC courses, and 100000 people would register; but, then, the number of people completing the courses is much smaller. In principle you could say, “What if Stanford and MIT say if you complete these MOOCs, you get a Stanford or MIT degree?” They could certainly wipe out the rest of higher ed. But when you start thinking along these lines, then you find, maybe in 4 years there will be a million Chinese students or students from other parts of the world who will be Stanford graduates. Then everybody is a Stanford Graduate.

SN: And that would devalue the value of the degree?

HLD: That would be one impact. Then, how do we know that one million Stanford graduates really took the course? This raises the crucial question of how you police the validity of the transcript. I don’t have the answer to that. So when people ask me about this, I find I have no answer. We certainly worry about the quality of delivering online courses. So if we are going to do online courses, our emphasis would be that we need to provide teaching coaches, we need to provide technical assistance to faculty members so that they can construct a first-rate teaching module that students feel that they are learning, that they are really rigorous. I think that can be done. My belief is that we provide proper support to the faculty so that faculty know we’re not just videotaping them in front of a blackboard but that we’re really creating an interactive mode of education, and through this interactive mode you can deliver a rigorous education. I also know in a course, its success has to do with the homework you require, the reading materials. I came from Taiwan. We had this very strange mode of education. Work very hard before college and then once you get to college, it’s play, play, play. I can tell you that during the freshman year I would go to the classroom and often just doze off.

Conversations with Dai continued on page 10
Conversations with Dai

Conversations with Dai continued from page 9

I’d just go and ask what the professor was teaching and then I’d go back and read the books. A lot of studying in college is self-imposed effort. The professor is pushing you along. Certainly a great instructor is immensely valuable. I actually had one instructor, she was so good, that after taking her course, listening to her lectures, I just found that my brain had come alive, and I was really able to think. I understand the value of great instruction. But I would say 90% of my college learning was self-learned.

SN: One of the many concerns I have with MOOCs is that there is no interaction between the professor and the students. There’s no way for me to evaluate 75000 students. I can’t guide them. And then there’s the difference between a case like yours, coming from very rigorous high school preparation whereas you suggested in our prior interview, many American students do not. Although I’ve found many Temple students to be enormously self-motivated, in part because many of them are paying the bill by themselves and in part because they’re “self-starters.” I also worry about this—and the statistics so far bear this out, that those who do best in online courses tend to come from backgrounds where they’ve already been coached to understand what university learning requires.

HLD: I totally agree. I don’t think online learning will ever replace classroom instruction and the interaction between faculty and students. I don’t think the current MOOC mode is the optimal mode, but we can certainly design online courses that are effective even in the aspect of interacting with students.

SN: Absolutely. Absolutely.

HLD: I think the concern is there. I think our job, my job is to make sure that we don’t just fall into the mode of having the faculty member just standing in front of the blackboard being videotaped. And then saying, “Here’s an online course.” If we want to do it, we have to do it right.

SN: We all use online tools all the time for our research. I introduce students to online tools. I think there are great examples of hybrid and purely online courses. As with many faculty, we are fully ambivalent, we want to see this go well but then we are concerned how it will actually happen. For instance, Temple takes so many transfer students every year, and we can’t know if other schools are doing online education in the high-quality way you and I want to see Temple do it. And with the pressure to take in transfers not only to foot our own bill but also from the state to do better in time to degree and completion percentages, I think there’s some concern about parts of the curriculum getting away from us. What is your sense, in more concrete terms, if you can say, what we might be able to expect in terms of guidelines and initiatives in this area? What’s in the works?

HLD: The President’s committee, a committee appointed by Dick Englert and chaired by Trustee Chip Marshall and Dean Moshe Porat, completed a report which that laid out general principles, basically said that Temple should take a serious look and then start to engage with online learning. And after this report, I set up a smaller workgroup on online education. This is actually now part of President Theobald’s overall campus physical plan.

SN: This is within the Master Plan process.

HLD: Even before the Master Plan is completed, this particular workgroup is going to put out a set of recommendations. I think by the time the report is released, there ought to be some actions. My prediction having only seen the preliminary report is that we will set up an Online Education Office, but most likely this office will be operated with the Teaching and Learning Center. That Center is for supporting faculty in their teaching. This simply means that not only it is important to market the courses, the business and the commercial aspect, the most important part is how you support the faculty to really do a course right. In fact, the President has already approved the first year’s budget, and we’ll start setting up an office with staff and technology.

has allocated an operating budget for the creation of an Online Education and Distant Learning office within the Provost’s portfolio.)

SN: What some people miss is that the reason that the MITs and Stanfords and Dukes could get into this early is that these courses are enormously expensive to do well, and people I know who teach online courses, how much front-end work there needs to be. You only save money on instruction here, I think, if you do it poorly.

HLD: I think faculty should understand that our view is not everybody is going to do this. We are going to do this in several targeted areas. For example, some of the Gen Ed courses. Or the beginning or intro courses—the primary beneficiaries in this area are campuses like TUJ and Harrisburg. For instance, TUJ has a 2+2 computer science major, 2 years in Japan, 2 years here. How do we deliver the first two years’ courses? That’s a big challenge. Some of these courses may be delivered online. The other area is that we might find master degree programs where there is a niche market. I read a report recently, for example, that there is a prediction that a huge number of jobs would be added because of the natural gas boom. To support the natural gas boom requires workers that have knowledge in both environment and energy technology. So combining the two disciplines together to create a new master degree program makes sense. And most of the people in this business are not traditional college-age students, so online delivery will be suitable.

“I don’t think online learning will ever replace classroom instruction and the interaction between faculty and students.”

SN: They probably already have a bachelor’s degree under their belts.

HLD: Right. So here is an opportunity to create an online degree program and then market it available for all over the country. It’s not like we’re going to tell every faculty member, “You need to take your course online.” That’s not going to be the case.

SN: When MOOCs first appeared, I couldn’t figure out aside from branding and perhaps selling the data of the students how this would work financially, since there seemed to be high hopes that way. Well, of course, once you start granting credit for MOOCs then the financial advantage is clearer, and the fear is that the lower level courses at Temple and elsewhere might get wiped out if we start accepting MOOC credit for some supposed equivalent to a Gen Ed course somewhere else. That worries people, including me.

HLD: On that particular point, I would add the following, that that probably won’t happen, for a very weird reason—we are among the institutions with the cheapest tuitions. Imagining our students spend more money taking a MOOC course to get credit rather than here at Temple? That probably won’t happen. On the other hand, we gradually want to participate in the MOOC market, even if only for branding reasons. Here, our strategy will be to identify faculty members with higher name recognition. We’ll put out a few, not too many, but some MOOC courses, and then people will see this and then...

SN: It will be a gateway to Temple.

HLD: Yes. That’s our general strategy.

International Education: Branch Campuses, Collaborative PhDs, and Graduate Study Abroad in the Humanities

SN: My next questions have to do with international education. This is something you’ve been heavily involved in, I know; you just mentioned, for instance, the 2+2 program in Japan. I’m wondering if we are planning to open up physical branch campuses like we have in Tokyo and Rome and as many other universities have been doing in Asia and on the Arabian Peninsula.

Conversations with Dai continued on page 11
HLD: This is a really big issue I have been pondering for several years. I think President Theobald just went on his first trip abroad in his official capacity as President. There are several revelations I can offer here. Number one—the other day I was joking with someone in a dinner hosted by Mayor Nutter for our sister city Tianjing in China. The people visiting were primarily in commerce and business. I was joking with a guest that when you look at how competitive American manufacturing and other industries and services are, education is the last line of defense. If you view education as a business, it is the one business where we still have the best goods in the world. Even though in most of the Asian countries, their education institutions are expanding very rapidly, there is still a great need for more capacity. Their economies are still growing at a much faster pace than ours. So families’ willingness to spend in educating their children is still strong there. One of our major strategies, then, is to have more international students on main campus. This is not just because for economic reasons. But because in this world, just as our President went to China to see the competition we’re facing, we need to expose our students to a globalized environment.

SN: And also to broaden their cultural experience.

HLD: Yes. Either we bring our students abroad or we bring the international students to main campus. So when we design an international strategy, that is our number one goal. Now let’s talk about whether a physical campus is what we should pursue. I think if you look at our Japan campus, you’d say it has not been very effective meeting this particular goal. We have a campus in Japan. It stands alone by itself. We don’t have much interaction. In the earlier days, many faculty members from Temple’s main campus went, but now many, many fewer. A physical campus may not be the strategy. Look at Carnegie Mellon, for example. International students account for 29% of their total student body. Temple is at 6.5%.

SN: And Carnegie-Mellon doesn’t have a separate campus in a place like Shanghai.

HLD: Right. It’s not essential in terms of a globalized university. This doesn’t mean that you can’t leverage an international campus to achieve this goal. If we want to do it, we have to design it in the proper way. Japan, at one point, was the focus of American universities. If I’m not wrong, 39 American universities set up campuses in Japan, and now we’re the only one left. At that time, Japan was the biggest supplier of students to the United States. Then the next wave of campuses was in the Middle East, in the Gulf States. 29 universities set up campuses there, and 13 of them closed in the first year and I don’t know how many of them left. The most recent wave is China. We hear about Duke and NYU opening up campuses.

SN: Not without controversy.

HLD: Even Kean University set up a campus in China. We are certainly thinking about this, but we are not jumping into it. We want to do it under the most favorable conditions, in the right location, and under the right framework.

SN: I’m an alum at Duke and I have friends at Yale, and the decision to go into Singapore in Yale’s case and into China in Duke’s was controversial among the faculty because there are issues of academic freedom at stake, and they are sticky ones. On one hand, you want to be a courteous guest. On the other hand, certain things have to be discussed if we’re going to generate knowledge that aren’t negotiable.

HLD: Our current focus is through these collaborative, joint, sequential programs. Like the 2+2 for Bachelor degree programs and 3+2 programs for Master’s programs.

SN: Another question along these lines. I was talking with a colleague in CLA who perceives that there has been a move away at Temple from helping to get our grad students abroad to do field work abroad, especially in the humanities. Do you perceive that? If so, what can we do about it, if any-

HLD: I assume you are asking about undergrads as well as graduate students. For graduate students, it’s hard for Master students because the course of study is too short. But for the PhD students, we are starting to establish a new model, a dual PhD model. We have started one with Yonsei University, which is arguably one of the best in Korea. What we do with Yonsei is that a PhD student can go to the partner university and do research in a collaborative way for 1 or 2 years, and then, at the end of completing the thesis, the student’s credentials are approved by both universities, including the thesis, and at the end he or she gets two PhD degrees, not a joint degree, but both.

SN: Could that be expanded into the social sciences or the humanities?

HLD: In this case, there are financial implications. The challenge is to find the right counterpart where you can do collaborative research. So in the natural sciences, engineering, or medicine, if you can find a PI (Principal Investigator) or a laboratory that shares your interest, you can find a thesis that can be carried out in both universities. That’s the challenge. The implementation is the challenge. The concept is simple. Now, in the humanities, it’s slightly different. There, you have the issue that the student him or herself does the research, so there’s no such need to go to another “laboratory.”

SN: Unless you’re an anthropologist doing fieldwork, for example, or an historian studying the history of China. And my sense from this colleague is that the infrastructure to support this at Temple is lacking. And we might actually be seeing a change in the humanities in terms of the model of scholarship. We are looking to the natural and “harder” social sciences, thinking about humanities labs. These are increasingly common, especially among people involved in the Digital Humanities. There is a recent initiative out of Harvard thinking about the humanities as collaborative ventures producing knowledge rather than person stuck in the stacks alone, like I was, writing my dissertation.

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“We have faculty saying we want more students to go abroad, but if the courses are not going to be accepted, the student will not go.”

HLD: There is always a financial angle here. In the natural sciences, the driving force is that if you have a piece of equipment I don’t have, but I can benefit from it, so I send my students to your lab, that’s the benefit part. Otherwise, why should I pay for my student to do research I don’t want to see? In the Humanities, the student is funded by Temple, often through teaching assistantship. Let’s say the student is going to Cambridge to study Shakespeare. What’s the benefit to Temple, unless Cambridge is willing to fund half of the student’s fees?

SN: They may be willing to go halves on it. There are international fellowships as well. I suppose there are other reasons. It could be Cambridge or it could be a school in China interested in the production of Shakespeare around the world. I think of a friend of mine at Bryn Mawr who produced an iPad app of The Tempest, there’s knowledge created there. The benefit for Temple is that our students get to make contacts and learn from people elsewhere, which enriches them as scholars, and this makes them more marketable and thus more likely to get jobs, if we want to talk in those terms. It’s not quite as concrete as the trade-offs you cited in the natural sciences.

HLD: You can have study abroad to have the experience; the other model is to advance this model into a dual degree. For undergraduates, there are two main impediments. The first is financial, and that depends on the particular student’s financial resources. The second one the faculty can help, though. When a student goes abroad, the student takes courses and needs to transfer the course credits back to Temple. The student has paid tuition to Temple and through exchange they go to a foreign institution. What we find is that our faculties are sometimes reluctant to accept these course credits. Here I find a contradiction. We have faculty saying we want more students to go abroad, but if the courses are not going to be accepted, the student will not

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Conversations with Dai continued from page 10
Conversations with Dai

Conversations with Dai continued from page 11

go.

SN: In around two weeks, I’ll be leaving for a study abroad program, taking 14 students to London, that, I hope won’t be a problem. These will be Temple courses taught by Temple faculty.

HLD: Right. It shouldn’t be a problem there. Here, I find some nationalism at work here. When students go to British universities, we find it much easier for faculty to accept the credit. But that’s not the case when it comes to Asian universities, even though sometimes these institutions are better-equipped than we are, and their faculty are all US trained.

SN: Does this impediment happen across disciplines?

HLD: Yes, across disciplines.

The Value and Cost of a Temple Education: Financial Aid, Tuition, and The Conwellian Mission

SN: One of the initiatives that you’ve put forth is a model of providing more merit-based aid, and this will increase the educational quality of Temple by bringing in better-prepared students; and this will, in turn, among other things push up our rankings, which is not rankings for rankings’ sake because resources follow rankings, and so then, we will get more money, and then . . .

HLD: [Laughs] You say it so well, Steve. I should hire you as my spokesman. You make it sound like these are your ideas.

SN: [Laughs] Well, there would be some conflicts of interest there, I think. And I know these are your ideas, since I have heard you explain them in various settings. And then with more resources, we’ll be able to offer more need-based aid.

HLD: Yes.

SN: And what I’ve heard from some faculty members is that those effects are very remote, will take years to happen, and they may not happen at all. And then, in the meantime, we’ve lost purchase on the Conwellian Mission. I’m wondering how you would respond to this, if you could provide other examples where this sort of approach has worked.

HLD: Let’s just say that today we charge the tuition that Pittsburgh and Penn State charges. Is that a crime? We are all state-supported research universities, and Philadelphia is more expensive than Happy Valley or Pittsburgh. If we charged that tuition, we would have $100 million more a year, man! If I had this $100 million more — or, I should say — if President Theobald has this $100 million more, we could put half of it into financial aid. It would increase from $85 million to $135 million, and that would increase our discount rate from 13% to 20%.

SN: How much of a rise in tuition would that be? What’s the gap?

HLD: The gap would be about $2500 per student. It would be about a little less than a 20% increase.

SN: But that money would be re-circulated to help those who would need it.

HLD: Yes, you could take whatever percentage you want and apply it to financial aid. If you took all of that $100 million and put it in financial aid, our discount rate would be about 30%.

SN: And that would put us closer to some of the other schools you’ve talked about, like Drexel.

HLD: Drexel charges $35,000. We would still be far away from that.

SN: But the discount rate would be similar.

HLD: Yes. If we had followed Pitt and Penn State’s strategy, then we would be much richer, so our students would be able to enjoy a much higher discount rate. I close my case.

SN: You wouldn’t do this in one fell swoop, of course. How would you phase in this increase?

HLD: Of course not! I’d have a lynch mob after me if we tried to do it all at once.

SN: Your face would be on a lot of Wanted posters, for sure. Let’s say we had this $50 million, would we split it between merit and need-based?

HLD: I think most of it would go to need-based. This year we were very successful—I can tell you that our average SAT score will jump 18 points. We have not only almost doubled our annual intake of honors students from 350 to 550, the 550’s SAT is 1370. The previous year’s was 1340. That only required us to spend just a bit more than $2 million.

SN: Your sense is that that investment will pay off.

HLD: If you are asking will it pay off, I can’t answer that. I have many people coming to me for resources, saying that this $2 million could be used for many other purposes, you could fund this or that operation, my operation. I can’t tell you that I made the right decision. I can certainly say that $2 million made a substantial and appreciable increase in the student characteristics. I can’t predict what the impact will be on the US News and World Report ranking, but I can almost assure you it will improve.

SN: What you’re talking about is really a two-track strategy. I think some people have understood this that the aid money will be diverted to merit-based aid in hopes of long-term effects. But you also plan to increase resources by raising tuition, which can be used to fulfill the Conwellian mission in the short and medium-term with more help coming in the long-term if an increase in the ranking of the universities leads to a virtuous cycle of increases.

HLD: And at the same time, as I said, our goal is to improve the quality of education we deliver. I sit in this office, and I really find that we need to improve our student counseling, for instance. The year before, a student averaged for non-emergency cases an 8-week wait time. We have cut that down to 2 weeks. And I have people telling me 2 weeks is still too much. The only way to handle this is to increase the number of counselors, and that means we need more resources. All over, I find that by holding on to this low-price model, we are not helping the students, as the model intends; in fact, we are doing the reverse. We are not providing the services our students need.

[At this point, one of the Provost’s staff members came in to remind him that he had another appointment.]
Conversations with Dai

Conversations with Dai continued from page 12

SN: From the faculty standpoint, we want to make sure that there’s a conversation.

HLD: I know the decision is mine. And I’m going to get a paycheck no matter what I decide to do. It’s not about the paycheck. I really want to put us on the right track, do the right thing. As I was saying when I was interrupted, I was going to say, “Deliver the best education that we can.” But I also want to keep Temple prosperous, so that we can keep printing checks to support the faculty. This year, I really appreciated how President Theobald has guided the university. For the first time in five years all the colleges are seeing increases in their budgets.

SN: The first time I can remember that happening.

HLD: Four years of cuts and now we’re reversing that trend. Even though the state funding is flat, and we have increased the undergraduate tuition only 2.8%. By the way, we have substantially increased the graduate tuition. I can tell you this. The graduate tuition will increase 8.5%. You can also ask me why. Do you know how we determined that increase? We took Penn State and Pitt’s tuition and multiplied by 80%, and that required an 8.5% increase. We are worth at least that much. Why do we price ourselves so low?

SN: That’s going to be interesting. Many of our students in the English department come unfunded, which I think is a terrible decision for them to make. But then if we only took funded students, the college wouldn’t let us run our seminars that small...

HLD: We need to work out a model that is flexible and also satisfies multiple needs. I think we should be able to create a model that is win-win for everybody. The way you just described the situation in English, you pointed out several things. We don’t want to harm the intellectual community—meaning the seminar model. We really want to keep that. But then how many PhDs in English should we produce?

SN: Not too many, actually.

HLD: Right. You want to fully fund those with the most potential, and you don’t want to encourage people to incur debt and also give them false hopes...

SN: No. It’s an unethical enterprise.

HLD: So we must be able to find a model where we focus the resources and maintain the vitality of the intellectual community.

SN: One of the ways to do this of course is to have a larger Masters program, which is one of the things we have been talking about.

HLD: Right. Wonderful.

SN: Yes, we have some great doctoral students. But then many of them can’t fulfill their potential because they’re working other jobs and taking out loans or their teaching loads are too high, and then where are they? And where are we as a department? One of the things that interests me about decentralized budgeting is that should give the faculty more of a voice but with that will come more responsibility, too. I am going to be fascinated to see how these budget committees do when they are presented with the actual numbers. “Ok, you wanted this power, but here’s the responsibility that comes with it.” It’s going to be very interesting.

The Eighth Annual Global Temple Conference

The Committee for International Programs (a subcommittee of the TU FACULTY SENATE), in conjunction with the International Programs office, is pleased to announce the Eighth Annual Global Temple Conference will take place on Wednesday, November 20th, 2013 at the Howard Gittis Student Center.

This year’s theme is Global Movement: Migration, Urbanization and Cultural Dynamics, and Audrey Singer, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, will be the keynote speaker.

This year’s keynote address will be given by Audrey Singer, a senior fellow at the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program. Her areas of expertise include demography, international migration, U.S. immigration policy, and urban and metropolitan change. She has written extensively on U.S. immigration trends, including immigrant integration, undocumented migration, naturalization and citizenship, and the changing racial and ethnic composition of the United States.

Faculty with questions about the program should contact Joel Macxy (Conference Chair), Denise Connerty (Assistant Vice President, International Affairs), or Beth Lawson (Administrative Assistant, Education Abroad) at global@temple.edu.

For more information on Global Temple, including past conferences, please visit: http://www.temple.edu/studyabroad/globaltemple/conference.html

Introducing the Way-Back Machine

I was recently gifted by my predecessor, David Waldstreicher, with a box of Faculty Heralds from the 1980s and 1990s, which we haven’t yet had a chance to put online. He directed me to the following issue from February of 1996, which includes an article on the coming of Responsibility Centered Management. I also found interesting the article on the perennial topic of What’s To Be Done With Ambler as well as the columns on the timely issues of technology in the classroom, recognizing domestic partnerships, and the need for Disability Studies, among others. I include this issue not to suggest that Temple has made not changed since 1996; the articles themselves reveal that this is an absurd suggestion. But I do believe we can learn from our past, and then it’s also not the worst thing to smile ruefully about the persistence of certain bedeviling issues.

My apologies for the imperfect scan of page 3.

- The Editor
A Conversation About General Education at Temple: Past, Present, and Future

Conversation about GenEd continued from page 4

that course caps are appropriate to our goals, which they do indicate are quite ambitious.

SN: This is a point tied not only RCM. One thing I found interesting about then-Interim President Englert’s White Paper from 2011 was that almost everybody focused on his proposals for reorganizing colleges and schools, and those were important. But I didn’t hear many faculty pick up something that seemed to me as consequential in that document, which was that it explicitly gave Deans the authority to set class sizes on Gen Ed and Writing Intensive courses. RCM hasn’t happened yet and you’re already starting to see pressures; are you starting to see class sizes move up. Do you have a sense of the specific numbers?

JP: Certainly. All sections of Intellectual Heritage have gone up by 2 if not 3. They started out at 25 and now they’re at 27, and there’s a suggestion that they may go up to 29. English 802 in First Year Writing have gone from 18 to 20 and they’re talking as high as 22.

SN: I’ve seen as high as 26 for First Year Writing.

JP: Depending on what budget model that CLA is using to address workload issues, they present a range of scenarios. It’s fantastic that Rich Joslyn has done a lot of the planning I’ve seen, and he really tries to describe what the impact will be financially, but he also points out, “Look, this is a service we do for the university as a whole.” I think CLA has experienced a drop in credit-hour generation this Fall, which does not bode well for lower class sizes in the future.

PJ: They’ve seen a drop in their non Gen-Ed courses; Gen Ed credit-hour generation has gone up by almost 5%, so their non-Gen Ed credit-hour generation has gone down significantly. That means that the extent to which Gen Ed is housed in CLA is even more important to that college than it has been in the past.

SN: And are you seeing this in other colleges as well?

“...the research out there is quite clear, that when you get to about 25 or 26, the effectiveness of writing-intensive courses goes down.” – Peter Jones

JP: Absolutely.

DS: Not just Gen Ed and not just Writing Intensive. And not just in CLA.

JP: Right. We’ve seen class sizes go up by 15 or 20.

DS: There seems to move more toward different configurations of classes. Our initial proposal was for small classes; but more of them now are big lectures with small breakouts. In general, there seems to be a shift not only toward having a few more students in a section but also in the overall presentation—more lectures, fewer smaller classes.

JP: And some recitation sections have been eliminated. So the more intimate individual contact that students would have with faculty has been eradicated, as has support for TAs.

SN: And the TAs themselves are having to mind more students.

JP: That changes the nature of the assignments.

DS: Because Gen Ed is competency based, it’s not well-served by relying too heavily on multiple-choice exams. While these exams can be designed to test critical thinking, problem solving and other competencies that Gen Ed (and major courses) emphasize, they are not always designed with this in mind, and we should be careful as to how they’re used in Gen Ed.

PJ: You were right to identify that statement by then-President Englert. But the context of that statement was that I don’t know if there had been any explicit policy on the matter. It had just been common practice that a Dean could set caps wherever they wanted, and it so happened that the Dean in CLA had set that cap on class sizes. I think what Dick was saying that he didn’t want to have any university policy, including a Gen Ed policy, telling Deans how large a class should be. The decision about the quality of the delivery of a course should lie with the Deans. However, imagine they take a writing-intensive course and, say, present it with TAs or undergrad assistants. Would you say that class sizes couldn’t change to allow for that? But it doesn’t take away from the fact that someone has to assess the quality of the course, and given that GEEC has the ability to assess these courses, if we can identify that, say, a writing-intensive course above a certain level is not fulfilling the goals we have for those courses, then we should bring those numbers down. Absent that, he didn’t want a limit imposed. But I was in a discussion with a number of the Deans across this issue, and they did recognize the fact that the research out there is quite clear, that when you get to about 25 or 26, the effectiveness of writing-intensive courses goes down. The other thing that’s interesting is that when you look at the Student Feedback Forms for our students, they start to become quite negative when you get beyond 24 or 25 in a Writing-Intensive course.

SN: That’s true of courses across the board when the class size goes up.

PJ: You get that effect somewhat across the board, but it’s much more pronounced in writing-intensive courses.

I would add one other thing, that in the Gen Ed policy document, it did mention a Writing Intensive Course Committee that a lot of people forget about. And they do hold the line. This is a faculty group; it is chaired by Lori Salem. They perform an independent assessment of the Writing Intensive courses. I think it’s vital because what it’s doing is saying that faculty are responsible for the curriculum. We’re not going to control the curriculum through unilateral rules but by quality assessment. We’re going to look at the courses as delivered. If you can teach a good writing intensive course along with an assistant with 27 or 28 students, we’re not going to force you to do it with 21 or 22 IF you can teach it well. But if you can’t show that, if there’s evidence to the contrary, then the burden is on you to justify that higher number. I think essentially passing the responsibility from central administration and unilateral rule to the faculty and telling them, look at the quality of the courses as delivered. You have the authority, you the Writing Committee, you the GEEC, you have the authority to say to the director of Gen Ed or me or the Provost, “We don’t want this.”

The Staffing Mix in Gen Ed and Promoting Faculty Buy-In

SN: To follow up on this, there are two kinds of things that might work against this sort of quality control. The first we’ve already mentioned: Under RCM, there is an incentive to generate credit hours and possibly to poach other people’s, which is why we need The Educational Programs and Policies Committee and/or the new committee proposed by the Provost, the Academic Priorities Advisory Committee, to act as a traffic cop to make sure that no other school can simply decide, “I’m going to teach First Year Writing, etc.”

The other pressure gets to a question I have about staffing. The tenure-track faculty with very few exceptions still run departments, and I’m interested in the statistics about what percentage of Gen Ed courses are taught by tenure-track faculty. I remember a debate in the Faculty Senate when we were first looking at Gen Ed, as to whether 65% or 70% of these sections should be taught by tenure-track faculty. And I just started laughing, and said, “Please. We’re not going to get anywhere near that number.” Not because I didn’t want that to happen but just because the worldviews and primary commitments of a lot of tenure-track faculty tend toward the major and graduate education. And thus, it’s no skin off their nose if you bump up caps on the Gen Ed courses that they rarely teach. So what percentage Gen Ed courses are taught by tenure-track faculty, and I’d want to distinguish between lectures with recitation sections and smaller courses where they teach directly? I understand this might vary significantly by college.

JP: 12-16% of the Gen Ed courses are taught by
A Conversation About General Education at Temple: Past, Present, and Future

Conversation about GenEd continued from page 14

Vallorie Perdier (VP): Much less than 65-70%.

SN: I should clarify, I don’t ask the question to suggest that a relative lack of tenure-track faculty necessarily means the instruction is any worse. I’m just thinking about where the power resides.

PJ: The vast majority of faculty teaching in Gen Ed are full time NTT. They are often teaching a 4/4 load, or, if they are lucky, a 4/3 load. That varies from college to college and different colleges are using different ways to reward folks who are teaching an extraordinarily large number of students. CLA has done an interesting job on that and I hope it continues. Some of the faculty who are teaching large lecture classes upwards of 120 students are getting credit for teaching two courses. But with the pressures coming with RCM, I don’t know if CLA will be able to sustain that.

PJ: I see this as part of a larger picture. In many departments, mine own included, we don’t have anything close to the number of tenure-track faculty to cover the courses our majors require. As a result, I’ve been in a number of faculty meetings, where we have to decide who is going to teach GenEd, lower division courses, upper-division courses, and Master’s and PhD courses. They are prioritized in reverse—tenure-track faculty are going to teach Master’s and PhD courses first, and then the upper-division courses, and by that time you’ve probably used up all of our tenure-track faculty. So by the time you get to lower-division courses, they are probably in the same area as Gen Ed, and I don’t know if there’s any intentional differentiation, to get back to the power thing, between having tenure-track faculty not teach GenEd courses or lower-division courses. I do think that there is a sense if you’re out there shopping for majors, the argument for Gen Ed, is that with lower division courses, they’re already committed. If you’re looking for new majors, you should emphasize Gen Ed. I think RCM might increase the attractiveness of that strategy. Of course, some departments might want fewer majors, like Biology.

[Laughter from Deb and others]

SN: I just wanted to share a copy of The Faculty Herald from the archives not yet online, which David Waldstreicher just gifted me with a few weeks ago. You’ll see there that the headline has “The Final Proposal for Gen Ed,” with final underscored.

“I think that in 10-15 years, Higher Ed will be centered on competency-based degree programs.” - Istvan Varkonyi

IV: Those were the days.

[Laughter all around.]

SN: Of course it wasn’t final. One of the issues around Gen Ed has to do with its genesis in what was a presidential fiat; any faculty who were around then might still feel it’s not for them. And because for a lot of faculty members their hearts are in their disciplines. That’s how they see themselves as scholars and as teachers, true of many colleagues I’ve spoken to. I should also second what Peter said about the scarcity of tenure-track faculty for staffing. I’ve actually asked to teach a section of First Year Writing and have been told, “We can’t spare you. If you don’t teach x, it doesn’t get taught.” But I also wonder what incentives might be offered to get more of the most capable tenure-track faculty teaching in Gen Ed so that they really have a stake in this. Because there’s going to be—as I don’t need to tell you—there’s going to be a battle, a contest, a sharp conversation coming up about the shape of Gen Ed, catalyzed by a change in our senior administration.

PJ: I’d like to back up a second and mention one thing that happened that was fabulous and helped turn around a lot of faculty who might have been skeptical at first. Religion made a decision about how to staff Gen Ed courses. I don’t know if it was Terry Roy who made the decision when he was chair….

IV: Yes, I think it was Terry Roy when he was chair 3-4 years ago.

PJ: So Terry decided that all tenure-track faculty members would teach at least one Gen Ed section a year. The result has been really well-received. Rebecca Alpert loves teaching Religion in Philadelphia, and I think the faculty members have enjoyed the experience as well. And part of that was their looking at the statistics and realizing that a high percentage of their credit hours were being generated by Gen Ed. And so they made a very conscious decision to staff their courses with tenure-track faculty members as a way of communicating its importance. They’ve been getting emails from Gen Ed and been part of the re-certification discussion and today we realize that we’re really trying to toe the line when it comes to competencies. I think that sort of self-regulation and awareness is better than any sort of incentive we could offer.

IV: I think that this is the challenge we face as we go into this new phase of Gen Ed. We’ve put into place parameters by which we can assess the quality of courses in the program. But there’s only so much the director and the associate director can do. It has to be incentivized for the chairs of the department. As we move forward, faculty development is key. I know there are some faculty members still committed to the old Core, and they are not going to change their minds. But there are a relatively small number, thank God. But then there are a great many faculty members who still don’t understand, “What is this thing called Gen Ed?” Even after all the Town Hall meetings and all the other efforts we’ve made. It’s a PR thing. We need to get to the chairs, even though they are there for 3-4 years usually. We have the Area Coordinators already available to talk to faculty, but there’s only so much we can do that way. I think that we need to create faculty development seminars around these pedagogical concepts of what we’re trying to do. And it’s this competency-based types of teaching that is at the heart of it. I think it is because we’re wedded to our disciplines because that’s how we were trained, and we’re going to die holding on to our disciplines. If you read The Chronicle of Higher Education, it’s all of what’s happening. I think that in 10-15 years, Higher Ed will be centered on competency-based degree programs. This is coming fast and furious. We have a study, “It Takes More than a Major.” I have a copy of it for you here—clearly indicates where this is all headed. In essence, we need to rethink what we are doing in higher ed. I think on this campus Gen Ed is on the forefront. We’re trying to trailblaze where we’re headed as an institution of higher education. The thing we have to do is try and get faculty on board and see the virtues of what a competency-based education is all about.

Fostering Competencies, Gen Ed’s Relationship to Majors, and The Ends of Gen Ed

SN: My last editorial was about competency-based education and who gets to set them and the threats and opportunities involved.

DS: And who gets to assess them.

SN: Right. And I want think about some of the push-back you might get in that effort. I’ve had a couple of interviews with the Provost, and his position isn’t anti-Gen Ed per se. But he seems concerned that our students, especially in the natural sciences, aren’t devoting enough time to their majors. And this puts them at a disadvantage in the job market and in graduate school. I don’t know if you have received similar signals. I know this is a somewhat awkward question, since we’re talking about the chief academic officer of the university and to whom some folks around the table report. But I do think there needs to be a conversation about it, and the fac
ulity need to be part of it. Because that’s the vibe I’m getting from him. I wonder if you think I’m reading it right, and, if so, if you agree with some elements of his diagnosis. You might argue that “it takes more than a major.” But then how would you build a bridge between Gen Ed and the majors, saying that it leads to discipline-specific knowledge rather than away from it?

**DS:** As a faculty member in biology and a member of the GEEC, I find the notion that thinking about a separation between discipline-specific knowledge and competency is strange.

**VP:** I agree.

**DS:** I want my majors to be thinking critically, to be solving problems, to be able to communicate clearly and articulately. Yes, they’re going to be thinking critically or who are good at problem solving? And from a job/profession perspective who doesn’t want people who can think critically or who are good at problem solving?

**SN:** But I suppose that percentage could change so that you don’t have the 1/3 mix of discipline, Gen Ed, and electives.

**PJ:** What’s happened is that the free electives have disappeared. Prior to Gen Ed, the majors had already expanded into the core. It was a wolf’s in sheep’s clothing. If you view this from a student perspective rather than a faculty perspective, you’d see what problems existed. So for a student in a major, there were lots of requirements hiding as core requirements. Not only that, if you changed your major those core requirements no longer applied to your new major. It was extremely punitive. That’s one major thing that’s changed. So there’s more truth in advertising now.

The other point I think is really important. I agree: This separation that a class is either building competencies or it’s focused on content is a fallacy. I’ve been here 28 years, and I remember 15 years ago we did a survey of undergraduates, and we were getting feedback very critical of the grad students teaching courses. We looked at it and realized it was our fault in a way: we were putting grad students in courses who were ill-prepared to teach as primary instructors. So we instituted a two-credit course you were required to take before you were put in the class. I taught that class, and we talked a lot about students who put together syllabi and they’d say “Critical thinking is an important part of my class.” And I’d ask, “Where is it on the syllabus? Where does it take place in the class?” And the fact was that there was no explicit discussion with the students or with anybody else. They hadn’t even thought through it; they had just convinced themselves that was in there. And I think all that Gen Ed has done is it’s taken those principles that Pamela Barnett is teaching all the time—make explicit the skills you’re going to teach, and put them in the syllabus, and make sure they’re there in the syllabus and the course content.

**VP:** And in the assignments.

**PJ:** And in the assignments. I think if that principle would seep out into the major that would be wonderful. I’ve been here for 28 years, and I have had more pedagogical discussions around Gen Ed in the past few years than I had in my department before I got involved with Gen Ed.

**SJ:** We’re having curricular discussions in the English department now, and for a lot of tenured-track faculty who are still largely the people who are making curricular decisions. One of the things that would help here is if you could throw down the gauntlet to the faculty and say, “We’re teaching these competencies in Gen Ed. What are you doing with them in the major?” But you’d also want to be able to say, “These competencies feed into what you want to do.”

I think another thing is that, you all can make these arguments and you’re still going to get pressure to cut the number of credits devoted to Gen Ed.

**PJ:** But they’re already out of free electives in many majors. They’re at zero.

**SJ:** Let’s look at science and technology and engineering. Their Gen Ed curriculum is only 25 hours. This is a result of the fact that, like CST Students, Engineering students do not have to satisfy the Gen Ed Quantitative Literacy (GQ) requirement as well as the two courses required in Gen Ed Science & Technology (GS) based on courses required of the majors. Gen Ed has approved a number of courses—sometimes single courses, sometimes multiple courses—that if any student completes s/he is waived of various requirements. A list of these waivers may be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin in the General Education section. You will need to scroll down the page to get to the lists.

**PJ:** I do want to go back to the provost’s view. The context for that is Provost Dai is looking at a university where the quality of our students is improving by leaps and bounds. He attributes much of that to the quality of the faculty. We are now attracting a group of students with some new expectations. It’s not a concern; it’s a question he explicitly wants to raise. If we’re improving the quality of our majors and that’s attracting a better quality of student, he wants to be sure that we have a quality general education program to go along with it. That’s the question that he’s asking. He used the opportunity of this review to focus only on what an external group of reviewers say. He wants to know what the faculty groups within the university think of Gen Ed and how they want to change it. He’s as interested in the response of the faculty response to that review. The members of the GEEC have had a chance to read on and comment upon the external review, just as you would with a departmental.
A Conversation About General Education at Temple: Past, Present, and Future

Conversation about GenEd continued from page 16

review.

SN: Though I assume that discussion would have to spread beyond the GEEC, and the question is what kind of faculty feedback you would get more broadly about Gen Ed. What studies do you have in the works or have you already commissioned to gauge faculty attitudes? Because, again, a lot of this about faculty buy in. You know there is some resistance. “Yeah, the new Gen Ed is all about making connections. Well, sewer pipes make connections, too.” The people on the GEEC have already bought in. So have the faculty in Religion. How do you bring more faculty on board? Even if Provost Dai is doing exactly what you say, it’s still possible that if a proposal comes up to increase major-specific work at the expense of Gen Ed, how will they react?

PJ: I think there is always going to be a tension. I’ll admit to it myself. I am attached to my discipline and then I work at a university where I practice that discipline. The first 15-20 years of my teaching, I just naturally assumed that students came here because they wanted to learn criminology and that they were different from students who came to learn sociology or any other discipline for that matter. And I’d have a lot of parents talk to me and say, “So what do you do with a criminology degree?” And I would always think about how difficult it was to answer those sorts of questions.

Now that Career Services reports to me, and now that I get to interact with lots of people looking to hire, and I’m shocked to see how far away from reality my view of the world was as a faculty member. I realize that I just wasn’t seeing the picture and that is for most employers, not all, they really don’t care about disciplinary boundaries. And frankly they’re sort of shocked about how naïve we faculty are about protecting those disciplinary boundaries. There’s this incredible tension between a world out there that is looking for a certain type of student who has been developed in a certain type of way, and then there are faculty members, and I include myself, who don’t see the world that way at all, and that just like me, these students are committed . . . I still refer to my students as criminologists, and I say, “You want to be criminologists, right?” That tension, I guess, will never go away. The faculty are not a random subset of society. They are totally committed to the disciplines they’re in and who have difficulty understanding anybody who is not. It’s not how even graduate schools work. Even graduate schools are willing to ignore disciplinary boundaries as take someone presenting a particular skill set.

VP: The same is true in Mechanical Engineering.

SN: I think that one of the forms of push-back you get about competencies from faculty is “Stop making me into a tool for preparing me for the job market.” The other argument about competencies is that the value of Gen Ed extends beyond making them “world ready” in which “world” somehow gets restricted to mean “job.” No one would want to underestimate the importance of job readiness. But there are other things that we do, and so of course faculty—perhaps a bit more so in the humanities—bride at that.

PJ: I think it does a disservice to that effort and to Gen Ed specifically to think that its function is just to prepare people for the job market.

IV: These are life skills.

PJ: We are preparing people to be quality citizens.

SN: Though I assume that discussion would have to spread beyond the GEEC, and the question is what kind of faculty feedback you would get more broadly about Gen Ed. What studies do you have in the works or have you already commissioned to gauge faculty attitudes? Because, again, a lot of this about faculty buy in. You know there is some resistance. “Yeah, the new Gen Ed is all about making connections. Well, sewer pipes make connections, too.” The people on the GEEC have already bought in. So have the faculty in Religion. How do you bring more faculty on board? Even if Provost Dai is doing exactly what you say, it’s still possible that if a proposal comes up to increase major-specific work at the expense of Gen Ed, how will they react?

PJ: But that’s not the dominant discourse about higher education at the state or federal levels.

SN: This is the problem with the competencies discussion—it’s about who gets to define which outcomes count as how. I’ve been saying to my colleagues, saying, “Guys, we need to get in front of this or it’s going to run us over.”

PJ: This emphasis that is being placed on rankings and moving up, I think, feeds into this discussion about jobs and getting students placed, and it’s left behind that discussion of the broader human condition and citizenship and what a college education does for you 10-15 years down the road and you’re a PTA member or you’re going into the voting booth. That discourse has been lost.

PJ: But in terms of the flexibility of defining what the competencies are, I think one of the nice things about Gen Ed and one of the things that came from the external review is this. If I get this wrong you can correct me, I’m just paraphrasing here. What they said was: When you guys started you drew a bright line between Gen Ed and the majors, and that was because of the history of the Core, and we think you were right to do that. But we’re now five years on, and I think that you guys need to start thinking more about the porous and permeable barriers and to think about things like whether a course can exist in two areas.

And the thing to remember is that’s what’s going on in Gen Ed is being defined by a faculty group. We have a GEEC. So Gen Ed is sitting in faculty governance. And if GEEC decides that they want to add or remove an area of competency. The people on GEEC are not just there as individuals; they’re there to represent the areas of faculty, which is why on GEEC, you can’t have more than 2 people from any one college. The idea is to get as much university-wide representation as possible. I feel that we’re at the point where having established the clear differences between Gen Ed and the majors, we need to start asking, “Do we want to add any Gen Ed areas? Do we want to remove any? Should we change the competencies?” We have to evolve. We have to keep evolving. Otherwise, we’re going to be way behind what industries are looking at. But one of the areas, and I don’t think this has come up before, that they did point out was, and they gave us huge kudos for having an explicit area on race and diversity, one of the very few gen ed programs in the country to include that. And they’re not surprised, given Temple’s history. But the idea they felt was missing was the issue of ethics and whether that would be a course or embedded across courses.

SN: That’s very interesting. Because when I interviewed Provost Dai, and I don’t know whether you read it—in it, he seemed to suggest
A Conversation About General Education at Temple: Past, Present, and Future

Conversation about GenEd continued from page 17

that ethics could somehow stand in for diversity. I’ll be printing a letter from Rebecca Alpert questioning that proposition. This really needs to probably be a both/and rather than either/or.

VP: Probably the problem is using the word competency. There must be a better word for what we’re doing. I’m trying to think of a term. Mental framework? Competency isn’t quite right.

DS: It lacks the sense of creativity, and it seems too task-oriented.

PJ: And actually I think that if you were to identify a really good course in the major, it would be what Gen Ed is trying to do. We talk about discipline-based content and competencies, but the fact is any good course should have them. I think the only difference is that in Gen Ed, we are articulating it explicitly, and in terms of searching for a course to add a course to the Gen Ed curriculum, we only want to add a course that is explicitly taking these competencies on. But in the major, the good courses whether they’ve talked about it or not, they’re there. They already exist.

“But am I right that you all are feeling some pressure to get Gen Ed Courses online? And, if so, how does one turn that pressure into a good pedagogical conversation?”

SN: What we’re trying to do in English with curricular reform to avoid turf wars is this: Instead of proposing courses to start with, though you can, what do you want them to be able to by the end of the course?

IV: Right. It’s backward design.

SN: Right. It’s reverse engineering. This is what I say whenever I talk with graduate students about teaching. Of course, whether I always remember to do this in my own teaching is another matter.

Gen Ed and Online Learning
We’re past time, and I’m very grateful. But I would like to ask you one more question, if possible, and that’s about online education in Gen Ed. Because one thing I’m hearing is that there are pressures not only in terms of class size but to get as many sections of Gen Ed online. Now some of that just seems necessary. For instance, when I was talking with the Provost, he pointed to the 2+2 program in Japan. The students there need to find some way to fulfill Gen Ed requirements remotely since they don’t have the staff to cover it over there. Of course, this is all happening in the context of a set of standards that are being suggested for online education at Temple, and I’m looking to publish on that soon to put down a marker of sorts so that faculty are fully included in that discussion, too. But am I right that you all are feeling some pressure to get Gen Ed Courses online? And, if so, how does one turn that pressure into a good pedagogical conversation?

IV: Interestingly enough, I was looking just a couple of days ago at the Fall enrollment figures. Two of the Mosaic online courses were cancelled for lack of enrollment. Yes, there are BA programs that are going fully online, and there is demand, no question about it. But thus far, we haven’t seen students breaking down the walls asking for online Gen Ed courses. At least is the picture that I’m getting this current semester. This may change in the coming semesters, but that’s what it looks like right now.

What does RCM do with this? We know that there’s already a formula out there that colleges are going to be charged for the square footage they use. So, in a way, maintaining those classrooms in Anderson, Gladfelter, Weiss, Beury, or wherever, will it be more cost effective if we put these classes online?

PJ: The SFF analysis that Peter has been doing indicates that students are not as thrilled with online courses as they are with the more traditional courses. They receive lower scores on the Quality Index scale, at least in Gen Ed. I don’t know about courses outside of Gen Ed.

PJ: To me, what that means is that we improve the quality of online courses. It needs to be as high as the ones that we deliver in person. I think we have to remember the history of online education at Temple. It jumped in with both feet in the 1990s and got burned. The discussions that have taken place around online ed now are not about “Oh, my God. There’s money to be made.” We’re way too late for that.

However, there’s plenty of potential at Temple to create ability for students to graduate in four years. We’re still only at about 40% graduating in four years. Part of the reason is the nature of our student body and the nature of the way we offer courses. One of the things I’ve learned from Banner implementation, is that they have never, ever, and we’re the 300th or 400th university they’ve dealt with, that they have never seen such restrictive prerequisites. So we shouldn’t be surprised that many of our students are struggling to graduate in 4th years.

For instance, until a meeting last year, English was recommending in its eight-semester matrix that students take its gateway course, English 2097, the second semester of the first year. That’s problematic because many students can’t take Analytical Reading and Writing (802), then listed as a pre-req for 2097, until that semester. This is in part because some students are placed into Introduction into Academic Discourse (701), which they need to pass before moving to 802; and in part because the desirability of some sort of balance between Spring and Fall sections means that some students who are placed into 802 can’t get into it until their second semester. 2097 is now recommended for the first semester of the sophomore year.

There are other situations…

DS: You’re looking at us down here on this end of the table.

PJ: If a student isn’t placed into Calculus, they cannot graduate in four years. In fact, if you’re placed in 701 math and you want to go into Engineering or CIS or Brioche or physics, that one decision is going to cost you.

DS: It’s not a decision; it’s a preparedness issue in some ways, too.

PJ: You have to be absolutely certain that that placement test is correct. And is it not possible where students can get support during the semester?

SN: It seems to me there are all these drivers that are at work here. The point about square footage is well-taken. Anybody who has ever talked to anybody who has taught an online course, says, if you think you’re going to save time and money doing this, you’re insane. The only way you’re saving money, if you’re going to maintain pedagogical quality, is in physical plant.

It does concern me, especially since it gets back to the staffing issue. Because if you have a remarkably large percentage teaching Gen Ed people who feel less empowered to say no to a teaching assignment for an online course or at least to ask questions about it, you can see the problem that emerges with the pressure to teach online courses. The chair has the authority to assign me courses; the Director of Undergraduate Studies can assign a course to me and say, “Look. This is what you’re teaching.” But since I’m tenured I’m in a better position to say, “Let’s talk about that.”

DS: “Is this really the best way to go about this?”

SN: Right.

PJ: It’s that power thing again.

SN: Right. It gets back to the question of what it means to have a conversation with the faculty. And then there are the complexities of what you mean when you say “the faculty.”

PJ: I think this is the point where you realize that Gen Ed provides a service. If the Dean in the Fox School of Business decides that he wants to offer an online undergraduate degree, we have to be able to offer an online Gen Ed. Otherwise then this university cannot fulfill its needs in that...
A Conversation About General Education at Temple: Past, Present, and Future

Conversation about GenEd continued from page 18

area. Not all the departments, not all colleges will have that sort of online presence. But we have to accept that some do, and that’s their decision, especially when we move into RCM.

Again, we have to be careful. I’m always aware of this. I always used to think that the rest of the world thinks like CLA faculty think. Obviously, the students are our clients. But we have to recognize that we must enable schools and colleges and individual departments to be able to do what they want. An example: Two years ago Nursing had enormous demand to offer an online program. We used to do Temple work in first two years, clinical work in the next two. We had people who are already RNs and had done the clinicals. They wanted the BSN, but we couldn’t offer that online program because we couldn’t offer an online Gen Ed. So we missed out on that opportunity. I feel that one of the things we have to in Gen Ed is be at the point where we would enable—and these are faculty decisions—but that if a department wants to go down this pathway, we need to be able to work with him.

JP: But there were other issues with the RN/BSN.

PJ: I’m just giving an example of a department or college or even a campus. Take TUJ. Or take Rome. It’s always been a bone of contention for me, I’ve always not liked the fact that so many students take credits there that they don’t need for the degree. Part of the reason is that we have a wide array of majors going there, but a very narrow array of courses that we offer. Gen Ed is the perfect answer, and we don’t offer Gen Ed courses there.

SN: I’ve just started up a Study Abroad program in London, and one of my hopes in the future is that we can offer Gen Ed courses there.

PJ: Good. Which is why the flexibility of Gen Ed in having a course living in two areas might really help.

So a student could go now and say, “You know, that course you’re offering in London that sits in two areas, I’ve already taken courses in one area, but not in the other.” It creates more flexibility for our students, and that’s why I’m fond of it. And that’s also where the online option can come in. I’d hate to go to Rome and do an online course, but . . .

SN: This also speaks to our vision of Temple, and specifically to what we call the Conwellian Mission of Temple. I think for Provost Dai, we are increasing the quality of our undergraduate population, which in his case is tied significantly to SAT scores, though by no means exclusively. But the data we have on online education suggests that the students who struggle most who come from backgrounds that have not prepared them as well for studying at a university. One of the things at stake here—and Gen Ed is the front line—one of the things we have to be sensitive about as we raise class sizes and increase our online presence, there is a risk that we are moving to educational modalities that make it harder for the students most at risk for not getting out in four years. So on one hand, you can make things easier for them in terms of what sorts of gates they do and don’t have to pass through. But if the nature of the delivery of the education is such that it alienates them or makes it harder for them to grab in and stick, then it becomes self-defeating.

Well, I’m happy to keep talking, but I’ve kept you here an hour and twenty minutes, and I know you have other things to do. Thanks so much for engaging in this conversation.
The President and the Provost have encouraged faculty to get more involved in identifying priorities for undergraduate education. Each of the presenters will give a brief report from critical groups and these reports are available on a PowerPoint presentation that will be posted on the faculty senate website. Following the presentations and discussion we will hear comments from Provost Dai.

Pam Barnett gave the initial presentation. She indicated that the report she is giving was the work of input from the Provost’s teaching academy (60 leaders in education, intensive faculty development experience; who take what they learn to help foster teaching excellence.) and others. The suggestions for strengthening undergraduate education are:

1. Focus on student skill development (robust support for units in the Vice Provost’s undergraduate portfolio) and focus on infusing these critical skill sets and GenEd competencies throughout the curriculum.
2. Promote deeper engagement with the community – Philadelphia, regional and global. We need to support efforts like Community-Based Learning, the Philadelphia Experience (PEX), and efforts to support our diverse international student population. One idea is an international student lounge with conversational partners programing.
3. Support and reward effective teaching at Temple through efforts like the Teaching and Learning Center, systematic and sustainable structures for evaluation, and thoughtful innovations for rewarding teaching. Teaching and learning deserve merit and should factor in promotion. We need more recognition for teaching faculty.
4. Set standards for educational quality in the classroom. Caps on student enrollment in foundational courses; quality control as we move online; learning spaces (especially with new buildings)

Jill Swavely gave the second presentation. Her report is based on conversations with the EPPC, the committee that is charged with proposals and programmatic change in undergraduate education (course and program proposals; advising issues, etc.). They spent two meetings discussing priorities and their top priorities are:

1. Increase faculty opportunities to engage with professionalization beyond coursework; guest presenters, professional contacts; integrating projects into courses, make real world projects more common and more available.
2. Maintain engagement with students in the presence of online teacher education. Counteract the potential for distance learning to become distancing.
3. Build assessment into courses and programs to facilitate course innovations. Create spaces for fresh ideas.
4. Increase collaboration between tenure track and non-tenure track faculty to facilitate course development. Give these two levels of faculty more opportunities to collaborate.
5. Advise students to take GenEd courses earlier in their careers. Assume students will be better able to translate skills across courses. We need more collaboration among faculty to make this happen.

Istvan Varkonyi reported from meetings with the General Education Executive Committee and the Area Coordinators of GenEd. There were four suggestions:

1. Support faculty committed to GenEd. There are many faculty assigned to courses who are committed to GenEd. We are now 5
Representative Faculty Senate Minutes, February 19, 2013

Minutes continued from page 20

years from the CORE, and GenEd is in the process of a program review. GenEd has been growing and improving. We should maintain this investment in the curriculum.

2. Expand training for faculty and advisors to expand their understanding and support of GenEd.

3. Communicate the relationship between GenEd and the majors. There must be an articulated transference of the GenEd abilities and competencies to upper level coursework.

4. Reduce class size and incorporate more interdisciplinary threads through GenEd and undergraduate coursework. We talk a lot about globalization, but we need to make this more present in our curriculum.

Back to Karen Turner (Facilitator):

Karen Turner (SMC): We really want a holistic approach to learning and to teaching.

Michael Jackson (STHM): Temple’s main campus is a different world after 5. There is a mad rush from dorms Thursday afternoon. Students are looking for social involvement but they have to go off campus. Safety is another concern. People are teaching in buildings with no immediate access to protection or communication after 5pm. Students are really looking for a social tradition.

Paul LaFollette (CST): A common theme across the reports is the need for more collaborative and interdisciplinary work. But, there seems to be a wall preventing this from happening, especially if they cross college boundaries. What can we be doing to help that along?

Joseph Schwartz (CLA): We seem to be dancing around one issue – the overburdened nature of teaching staff in general education. The quality of this strong program is threatened by class size. Many students do not come in with the necessary competencies and GenEd gives them those competencies. But lecturers at 4-4 loads is tough. We all know the financial constraints. Temple needs GenEd but we need to make a commitment to it. We need to look at teaching burdens. We have to confront the fact this university is oppressing a lot of faculty and by transit a lot of students. We must have GenEd – it gives the critical competencies.

Eli Goldblatt (CLA): I direct the first year writing program and have been very involved in Community-Based Learning. I support everything Joe says. We have too long supported the gradation of “who counts” at the university. We have “class structures” within the faculty. I want to make two brief comments: (1) Writing and literacy – the world is changing; this year this class of students has a different approach to reading and writing than previous years of students. Last year 10% of students used e-books. This year that number has increased to 35%. We’re still teaching in a 20th century university. We are already inside a major new era and we need to think about how we connect one on one and in small groups. (2) Connection to the community; the Community Based Learning center was seriously underfunded and will close. After May there is not going to be an office of CBL. This is a major problem.

Alix Howard (CLA): Where did lunch and dinner with the professors go? Can we structure faculty across disciplines together? A little can go a long way. GenEd is one place where faculty across schools and colleges do meet – where we can talk to students about job relevance skills. This should be encouraged. In terms of the NTT situation, I hope that the incoming administration will understand that NTTs do a lot of service in addition to teaching. Longer contracts would be nice.

Catherine Schifer (COE): GenEd is so important to this university, we are very proud of it. One of the themes is for standards for online. Last year there was an ad hoc committee that Provost Englert put together and I co-chaired with Vicki McGarvey. We came up with a report to look at standards for online teaching. It was presented to several important bodies. National standards suggest that online teaching should be good teaching. This report needs to go somewhere. (Steve Newman, Editor of the Faculty Herald suggested that we can put a report on this in the Herald.) And I’d like to pick up on creating community. Can we advocate a game center? Collaborative skills building games, team development etc.?

Kimmika Williams-Witherspoon (TFMA): Are we training students to be global citizens? They need to learn to deal with “the other” in very interesting ways now. The GenEd race curriculum is very important to this. Often our students are coming from environments where they do not have to attend to the other. We need to look at classes, evaluations, and assessments. The true payoff with Race curriculum is often after a student graduates and uses those insights and skills in the community and the world.

Karen Turner: We have an aging population as teachers. We really need to give better professional development.

Jim Korsh (CST): I’m here as a representative of aging faculty. Advising needs more support. Peter Jones is doing a great job of taking care of at-risk students. But all students need to see an advisor every semester.

Peter Jones (Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs): Tremendous things are happening. Temple undergraduate research forum and creative works symposium will be next Thursday. Some have already presented at Harriburg and some are presenting at national and international conferences. If you want to see what great mentoring looks like – go to the symposium.

Karen Turner: This excellent conversation will continue on Wednesday May 1 in Walk auditorium. Our goal is to come out of meeting that day with list of priorities to present to the Provost and President. Please encourage your colleagues to attend and/or to listen to sessions on TU Capture.

Paul LaFollette (CST): I have a motion that I want to make. Since this motion is coming from the floor, it can’t be voted on today. But, if it is seconded, it can be voted on in the May meeting.

Motion:

We have undergone many changes since last we had a university wide discussion of the place that undergraduate education holds within Temple. The discussion at today’s Senate meeting suggests a need for further conversation about these matters throughout the Temple community.

Accordingly, the Senate would like to invite our colleagues in the Administration to begin an ongoing dialog to consider how best to encourage and support excellence in our undergraduate programs.

To this end, we propose the formation of a joint Faculty/Administration advisory council for the ongoing purpose of evolving Temple’s philosophy and exploring best practices for our undergraduate mission.

We would propose that this council consist of representatives of the faculty, the provost’s office, the Deans, the office of General Education, and from other key academic support units.

We hope that the Administration will be willing to participate in such an undertaking.

There were several “seconds” on this motion.

6. Provost Dai (Dialogue with Dai):

This is a solemn issue we are talking about. He said he would have seconded this motion himself.

This is a great opportunity to hear your views of the GenEd program. And it is a critical year, given the program review. Initially GenEd seemed to be a mandate from the President’s Office. Then he sensed a lot of questions from faculty and deans. In general we have done an excellent job and this is a time to continue and explore what can we do to make it much more effective and valuable to students. He has heard we should extend education beyond the classroom. Many themes and
Representative Faculty Senate Minutes, April 11, 2013

Minutes continued from page 21

Ideas have been generated: lunch, game center, teaching load, diversity, classroom size, role of NTTS, more interdisciplinary collaboration, more faculty participation in advising, online education, need for tech support, value of community engagement in GenEd, needs for better assessment and evaluation, real world value of GenEd.

Provost Dai then presented his own perspective. He has a unique experience because he did not attend an US UG institution. His US HEI experience is only at the graduate school level. GenEd is based on liberal arts education. This is similar to goals of Confucian education philosophy: 1) citizenship, 2) continual learning, ability to enjoy life (scholars are artists and musicians), and 3) professional foundation for employment. If we accept these as our goals we should consider the following.

Black box: we have to look at outcomes we want to seek. We need to look at what are the inputs and preparation of students. Our GenEd is perfect for Asian students – for students who emphasize a focused, disciplinary concentration in their high school education. But when we consider the typical American high school graduate, they are far from specialized. They have already received the kind of general, skills based instruction that we see in GenEd. Our Temple future graduates are competing with the entire world for jobs. Are we preparing them for their jobs? What is the Temple education? How different is it from other HEIs? His guess is we are probably very similar.

Provost Dai indicated that he see the big question is “What should be the content of GenEd? Do we have the student having sufficient exposure to other areas? What kinds of new skills should be incorporated?”

7. Call to Adjourn:
It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 3:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia S. Jones
Faculty Senate Secretary

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Faculty Senate Meeting Schedule, Fall 2013:
Representative Senate: Thursday November 7, 2013, Kiva Auditorium 1:45 PM
University Senate: Friday December 6, 2013, Kiva Auditorium 1:45 PM