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2025 Conversation - 4/9/2013

The College at Brockport

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College-2025 Dinner Meeting

April 9, 2013, 5:00 – 7:00 PM, at the Alumni House

Summary of Conversation from Notes taken by Dr. T.M. Rao

Present: Katy Bailey, Mihail Barbosu, Katherine Cariola, Gian Carlo Cervone, Robin Glazier, Ann McPherson, Wendy Price, T.M. Rao, Ralph Trecartin

At the beginning we went round introducing ourselves. Mihail informed everyone that this is a free flowing conversation and he did not want to place any structure on it. It was indeed a free exchange of ideas, views, concerns, opinions, etc.

1. College has done a good job in the area of “wellness”. Smoking ban on the campus is a good policy that promotes wellness. SERC is a wonderful facility. It has encouraged a lot of people to join – and there by improve their health.
2. Brockport school district wants more communication with the college. They have used SERC for some of their programs. A dialog (or is it trialog?) between the College, the School District and the town would be a welcome development. This would help community outreach programs.
3. There are no good restaurants in Brockport. It is hard to find a good restaurant when we are interviewing candidates or some visitors are on campus.
4. We need better marketing of the College. We have some billboards (on Route 104, etc.) but they are obscured and not easily visible.
5. We do a bad job of supporting semi-local (i.e. students who are from nearby places, but not local, not international) students. They do not have convenient transportation to the airport. (Some transportation is available – frequency is not sufficient.) They may need a place to store their stuff when they go away from campus, but there are none. (Something about a Western-NY-Cliff – I didn’t understand!) Previously the college used to own shuttle buses – but now that is contracted to some other organization.
6. Mihail organizes Cultural Nights at Mortimer.
7. There are complaints about lack of facilities during breaks: Some students are unable to go home during breaks, they need place to stay, eat, etc. (10-20 students)
8. Presence of foreign languages in our curriculum is very important. International Business (major?) needs foreign languages. In 2025 there will be more need for foreign languages. A differing opinion: But everybody is learning English! In China, Korea, Europe lots of people learn English (Even in Germany there are universities that teach courses in English)
9. Heard some comments about the Open House on Saturday. Admissions heard positive comments. Breaking them into smaller groups was not a good idea. Earlier, there used to be tables for each department – students and parents used to stop by at as many tables as

they want and have a one-on-one chat with department reps. But now, they follow the rep as a group. Some people are very talkative – they monopolize the conversation. Others just keep quiet. If someone wants to double major or a minor in another subject, there is no chance to see two or more reps.

10. How does technology affect you? Some people felt that it was a threat. Face to face education is better than on-line. Push towards on-line education is coming because of economic considerations.
11. Concerns about on-line degrees: How do you assure quality? Concerns about the quality of people who teach the on-line courses. How do you authenticate the student? How do you know the student who is taking the on-line exam is authentic? In some cases, education on-line can be OK, but the degree or certificate is given only after the person takes an in-person exam (like the CPA exam). There are some experiences, such as teamwork that can be gained by being on campus – on-line education makes the student isolated. It is protecting our brand name – (so we have to be careful how we award on-line degrees). Using software like Skype – may be an alternative.
12. But to avoid on-line courses completely would be a bad idea (Kodak was doing a fantastic job in film photography; but did not adapt to digital early enough; see what happened! We cannot bury our head in the sand.) We have to adapt. When big changes are coming, we have to take a leadership role. People were willing to adapt to digital photography even though its quality was poor in the beginning. Similarly, people will be willing to adapt to distance education, if they can get a job after that.
13. There are two different types of education: Training and Education. You can do training on the computer. But education – you have to do it face to face. (In 2025) we will probably have a combination of both on-line and on-campus education.
14. Is it going to be cost-effective to teach courses on line? You can have large classes. But it is going to be very difficult for the instructor to monitor all students, have one-to-one communication with each student. Even the internet can change – like cable TV there can be different bundles of internet access.
15. What kind of students are we going to have in 2025: Technology savvy? Too much multi-tasking? Able to use internet, Facebook, Twitter, texting with ease; have short attention spans? Lack ability to focus on one thing? We should have quiet places (in the library) where there are no distractions – just focus on one activity.
16. How is gen-ed going to be different? First we should ensure that the resolutions (about gen-ed) passed by the Senate are strictly followed. Gen-ed teaches students about many subjects. It is essential for a liberal arts education.
17. Transfer students: Will their numbers increase or decrease? It depends on the economy. Two years ago we had huge number of transfers. Now, not so many. “Seemless transfer” is being addressed at the SUNY level.
18. What will the library look like in 2025? They still want a physical library. There needs to be a balance between physical and on-line library. Currently graduate students face some

problems in accessing library – some of them are not here during the day – they can't even get an id-card. Library support should be available 24-hrs for the grad students.

19. What will the first year experience will be like in 2025? There was not a clear answer. First weekend, students are lost. We should have many 'nets' to catch them. We should reach out to commuter students. They need places to meet.
20. Restructuring of Academic Affairs into six (or seven) different schools: We need to do an assessment. "I miss being in the School of Letters and Sciences". "We become isolated" "Faculty learning communities bring faculty from many disciplines together." "Change the reward structure to reward interdisciplinary research"
21. Would we assign teaching responsibilities to graduate students? Faculty may teach and GA's do recitation.
22. Currently 60% of the Gen Ed classes are taught by non-tenure-track faculty.
23. Are students going to be involved in this conversation? We don't know. It would be a good thing to hear from them.
24. Living-Learning communities have helped very much in bringing faculty and students together (outside the classroom). Faculty office, classrooms, student-living quarters in the same building? – It could be good!