2-14-2013

2025 Conversation - 2/14/2013

The College at Brockport

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What are the elements of a Brockport experience that make it unique and highly valued? What should we preserve for the College of 2025?

- protect the academic core: more thoughtfully directed academic programs for struggling students as well as high achievers (funds to remain at Brockport), maintain face to face classroom experiences, provide high impact experiences
- Find the best students to come to Brockport and not play a numbers game which enrolls poor achievers that leave
- Constant theme of helping high achieving students who for financial reasons have to leave
- Keep learning emphasis on reading text and not succumb to visual aids as the primary learning source
- Retain the critical thinking component in pedagogy
- Retain collegiality among faculty so that faculty can work together to benefit the student
- See/treat students as individuals and not as a collective, help individual students
- Use technology correctly to preserve smaller class sizes
- Be mindful of the appropriate use of online learning, maintain a healthy balance for Brockport
- Student programs are an excellent resource but college has too many that overlap
- Maintain the shared governance on academic matters since faculty have a better idea of student needs
- Faculty create new knowledge base and must provide examples to the students, continued learning is important at any age
- Continue to hire the best teachers and communicators
- College requires minimum student enrollment every year to maintain its current size, do we need to be this size, quality suffers due to need for quantity

How do we think curricula will evolve? More Interdisciplinary/co-curricular?

- focus on liberal arts to allow students to be well rounded
- possible “immersion” courses – 3 weeks on 4 days off, repeat cycle for an entire year
- total immersion on fewer topics
- team taught courses for co-curricular courses
- “mega” courses with multiple interdisciplinary topics taught in a synergistic manner, i.e. bio/chem./math or chem./physics/math or English/history/sociology
- curriculum should allow students to ‘adapt better’ to job/world changes: focus on reading, thinking, analyzing, acting
- don’t just teach specific skills to students because they will not be able to adapt when change occurs

➢ How might pedagogy change to adapt to new ways of learning? What role will technology play in learning? The flipped classroom?

- Two sides on the merits of online teaching: for and against
- Online teaching a way to grow graduate education
- An observation/opinion was made that public colleges provide more online courses while private colleges do not
- Harvard and Yale offer online courses but enrollment does not consist of matriculating students
- Not enough studies comparing the efficacy of online learning vs traditional learning, data could affect acceptance or rejection of online learning
- The current semester model may be outdated
- College education not about getting a job but to prepare students to be more flexible in their thinking and approaches, adapt to various situations using the education accumulated; this guarantees jobs and job success
- Use of the mind is the key rather than memorized facts in courses
- A liberal arts education transforms students who then transform the world around them
- Adapt courses and topics to meet what students need to succeed rather than the standard course delivery, faculty need to reach out to employers to identify these topics
- The MIND is the key and this must be the selling point to students coupled with skills rather than just learning specific skills to complete a job ( which could change over time)
- Pedagogy has changed for the better over the years, professors were not as interested in student engagement or student feedback as they are now

➢ What does faculty work look like?
- pedagogy and curricular revisions are consuming more and more time to prepare students after Brockport, balancing scholarship and service increasing difficult due to this
- unknown if scholarship component will be as prominent for Brockport faculty, although scholarship is key to continual learning experience for faculty in order to set a life-long learning example for students
- in order for faculty to retain commitment to student education - more flexibility in work load needs to occur

➢ Are we organized by department?

- Organized as divisions/schools rather than departments
- will help promote co-curricular activities
- one centralized leadership can get more done: ask specific faculty to create/tailor curriculum, require certain faculty to specifically work together towards a common objective
- no Chairs, just Deans to get more people to do specific tasks, unify learning objectives

➢ Use of technology?
- should be used to get students engaged in classroom
- should be a ‘tool’ but not a driver of education
- students need face time with faculty in classroom
- no data showing that direct classroom interaction as engaging as online interaction
- many tools available that allow online learning to be similar to in-classroom attendance