Spoelhof Institute for Christian Leadership in Business
Governing Board Meeting
November 13, 2012
Minutes

Present: Claudia Beversluis, Beth Cok, Blake Riek, Scott Spoelhof, Jason Stansbury, Glenn Triezenberg
Absent with Notice: Michael Le Roy
Absent without Notice: Aubrey Sykes

O.P. – Jason Stansbury

The meeting was called into session at 11:03 AM.

Glenn began by discussing the financial status report accompanying his Director’s Report, as distributed electronically on November 5. He included the caveat that the estimated fund balance for the current year was based on the information provided by Financial Services, and was open to change based on any changes received from the office of Financial Services regarding benefits allocations or endowment appropriations. Estimated academic-year-end fund balances range from just over $35,000 to just below -$2,000, depending on endowment appropriations for this year.

The Board discussed this range of balances, and their implications for budgeting decisions. Although any adjustments to endowment appropriation rates will be determined by the Finance committee of the Board of Trustees, the Spoelhof Institute Governing Board believes that it is prudent to leave the expected appropriation unchanged for this year. It is prudent to expect reductions in endowment allocations in
future years. Externships and other programming will likely need to be suspended. A need may also arise to reduce the salary support provided by the Institute, with the potential implication that increasing portions of the supported salaries will need to be funded out of operating budgets or other sources. It will be important to budget conservatively going forward.

The Board affirmed that the Career Development office and the Spoelhof Institute are doing great work, and that enhancing the employability of all Calvin College graduates is a strategic imperative for the institution. This work may be one of a number of initiatives that the College can approach donors with for support over the next few years. Glenn should meet with Ken Erffmeyer to discuss possible sources of support.

Glenn then led a discussion of the Institute’s activities, as detailed in the Director’s Report and other supporting documentation. Calvin’s job fairs, in Grand Rapids and Chicago, have been very successful, to the point of being oversubscribed. Over 80% of Calvin graduates have had at least one internship or practicum experience by graduation. Institute-funded externships are pioneering online internship supervision, internship placements in Digital Communication, and an enlarged pipeline of students for the sought-after majors in Information Systems and Computer Science. The PowerPoint file included in the distribution to the Board is the Institute’s first attempt at a Career Development quantitative dashboard for users in the Dean’s and President’s offices.

The Board discussed a number of challenges as well. Remote internships offered for credit will be constrained by the need to garner
regulatory approval from each state in which those internships occur; some states are reluctant to grant permission for out-of-state institutions to offer for-credit education on their territory.

The reliability and accuracy of compensation data for Calvin graduates are limited by a high (but not unexpected) non-response rate to graduation survey items pertaining to starting salaries. Alternative data sources, including the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) report, and the College Employment Research Institute at Michigan State University, are useful for benchmarking potential student and graduate earnings.

It would be valuable to gather data on the proportion of graduates of competitive institutions that complete internships or practicums. Calvin’s 80% is likely to be substantially better than our competition, and that could be a selling point for the institution.

The Institute has a goal of 5% year-over-year growth in internship participation. It plans to meet this goal by targeting new groups of students who have not historically sought internships, particularly in the liberal arts. The Institute makes a constant effort to promote the Comenius Scholars program to liberal arts students, and after six years, students are promoting it to each other via word-of-mouth. Glenn has been leading a vocational plenary session at Prelude, which has helped to attract students’ attention earlier in their collegiate career. The vocation-focused comedy night featuring River City Improv attracted over 300 students. Contacts with faculty continue to make internships into an advising item, and many students come to the Career Development office straight from their advising appointments,
particularly from the Business department. Finally, the Institute is always seeking additional employers.

The Board congratulated Glenn Triezenberg and Beth Cok on their work, and expressed appreciation for their efforts.

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 PM.