Spoelhof Institute for Christian Leadership in Business
Governing Board Meeting
May 20, 2013
Minutes

Present: Claudia Beversluis, Beth Cok, Blake Riek, Scott Spoelhof, Jason Stansbury, J. Aubrey Sykes, Glenn Triezenberg

O.P. – Jason Stansbury

The meeting was called into session at 1:07 PM. Glenn began with his Director’s Report, and the Board discussed the topics therein as they were raised.

The Institute exceeded its annual goal for a 5% increase in internship participation among students. However, Glenn noted a need to increase the sourcing of internship opportunities for our students, despite increasing competition from Grand Valley State University and others.

Glenn noted that the time is right for the Institute to shift its primary focus away from offering internship experiences to more students, and toward increasing the quality of students’ internship experiences.

- Sixteen academic departments offer for-credit internship classes, and the remainder are supported by the Comenius Scholars program.
- For-credit internship experiences, which entail well-defined expectations for students and employers alike, and which are
typically subject to faculty oversight, provide the best opportunity for high-quality experiences.

- These courses also provide a revenue stream for the College.
- The Institute can champion the development of experiential pedagogy across departments, and perhaps even facilitate the development of interdisciplinary classes.
- The Board noted that in light of the financial pressure on many students, higher wage rates are an important aspect of high-quality internships. Over 72% of Calvin internships are paid, indicating both success and opportunity in this respect.
- The Board also noted the importance of providing internship opportunities to international students; Beth Cok detailed a number of Institute activities to that end.
- It will be important to communicate upcoming initiatives to improve internship quality with the relevant department chairs.

Glenn also noted that the Institute will face significant financial challenges in future years.

- In the next academic year, the Institute expects to continue funding its internship programs at the same level as this year, with help from the College to meet its $1,116 budget shortfall.
- However, subsequent years will likely see large shortfalls, necessitating reductions of internship program support and the elimination of externship support for the foreseeable future.
- Glenn has received cabinet approval to seek donor support to close those gaps, and is preparing to speak with donors in order to both solicit support and ensure that the Institute’s activities align with donors’ priorities.
• Board members noted that it will be important to hold a strategic planning meeting with the chairs of the Business and Engineering departments to discuss the structure of experiential pedagogy, and the sources of financial support for those programs. If faculty in those departments receive financial support from the Institute, it will be important for them to provide support to the College’s internship programs in addition to the delivery of their own departments’ internship classes. Extensive community engagement, including site visits, is very important for the College’s internship programs, and may be an important activity for Institute-supported faculty.

Following this discussion, the Board unanimously approved a motion to prioritize the Institute’s activities in the following order, subject to the availability of resources:

1. Increasing the quality of internships
2. Increasing student participation in the College’s internship program
3. Supporting faculty externships.

The Board also unanimously approved the proposed Institute budget for AY 2013-2014.

The meeting adjourned at 2:01 PM.