The Academic Bulletin
from the Office of the Provost of Calvin College
Friday, April 10 2015

The Accreditors Are Coming!

On April 27 and the morning of April 28, peer reviewers from the Higher Learning Commission will be on campus to evaluate Calvin’s case for reaffirming its accreditation. This reaffirmation happens once every ten years.

The site visit will feature three open discussions focused on the criteria for accreditation, and these discussions are truly open: the commission expects that faculty, staff, and students will attend. These discussions, if skillfully led, will focus on particular issues that the visiting peer reviewers choose to address based on their reading of the evidence submitted so far. Below is the tentative schedule for the three discussions and a list of possible questions (the team will come up with their own, based on what they think they need to learn).

**Discussion One: Mission and Integrity** (Tentative time: April 27, 3:30–4:30 p.m.)
- What is the strongest evidence that the institution knows and follows its mission?
- How prevalent is academic dishonesty? Are the policies for addressing it clear and rigorously followed?
- How well does the college’s website accurately present the college to prospective students?

**Discussion Two: Resources and Planning** (Tentative time: April 28, 9:00–10:00 a.m.)
- The college just went through a strategic planning process. What is one of the most important strategic emphases identified in that process?
- How do the results from assessment of student learning directly affect the allocation of resources?
- The college’s prioritization plan identifies some specific areas for realignment of resources. Was the process that produced this plan clear? Did it give various constituencies ample opportunity to weigh in?
- The president chairs several governance bodies. How does that work in practice?

**Discussion Three: Teaching and Learning** (Tentative time: April 28, 10:15–11:30 a.m.)
- What can you tell us about the educational framework and how it will guide the development of learning outcomes in your program?
- We had difficulty understanding Calvin’s approach to assessing the core curriculum. How are assessment data about the core curriculum influencing the current discussion about the core curriculum?
- What are the greatest challenges the institution faces to retaining students from the first year to the second?
- Do student-athletes receive sufficient support to balance the demands of interscholastic athletics and the classroom?

*Mike Stob, dean for institutional effectiveness*

Two New Senators

The terms of divisional members Joel Carpenter (Social Sciences and Contextual Disciplines) and Jack Du Mez (administrators with faculty status) on Faculty Senate come to an end this year. Divisional elections were recently held, and the new senators will be Becky Haney (SSCD) and Neil Carlson (administrators).
Core Revision Survey Launched

The EPC-Core joint committee sent the core revision survey to all faculty a little after 12:00 noon today, Friday, April 10. If you did not receive the survey, please check your junk mail folder. The deadline to complete the survey is Monday, April 20. Information gathered from this survey will shape the May 11 full faculty assembly.

From the Faculty Activity Reports—View more FARs (or submit one of your own) here


Coming Up on Campus

Monday, April 13
- Chapel. Kurt Schaefer, Matthew 6:9–13. 10:00 a.m., Chapel

Tuesday, April 14
- Chapel. “Prayer,” with the student worship team. 10:00 a.m., Chapel

Wednesday, April 15
- Chapel. Voice of Missions. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- History lecture. Bert de Vries, “Preservation and Community Engagement at Umm el-Jimal, Jordan in 2014–15.” 3:30 p.m., Meeter Center lecture hall

Thursday, April 16
- Chapel. Common prayer with Kurt Schaefer. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Presentation. Julia Smith, Lori Keen, and Jonas Weaver, “Transgender 101.” 3:30 p.m., Commons Alumni Board Room
- Animals and the Kingdom of God lecture. Dean Dass (U. of Virginia), “And Every Step Is into Presence.” 4:00 p.m., Spoelhof 150
- Japanese Culture Event Day. 4:30–7:30 p.m., Commons Annex basement

Friday, April 17
- Chapel. Nate Glasper Jr. with the student worship team. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Biology seminar. Ilene Gipson (Harvard Medical School), “Mucins: A Barrier to Infection.” 1:30 p.m., Science Building 010
- Teaching and Learning repeat lecture. Jim Jadrich, “Does Research Show That Calvin’s Liberal Arts Curriculum Fosters Critical Thinking?” 3:30 p.m., Spoelhof 150