

2025 DINNER CONVERSATION

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Guests: Skye Paine, MOD LANGUAGES; Dana Voelker, KSSPE; P. Ralph, THEATRE, D. Bloom, THEATRE

In the DNA of the College:

- We should keep our current size. Not able to have interdisciplinary exchanges in a bigger institutions.

- We are fairly good at **general** education. 66 of 120 hours outside of major are good. But they **should** explore broadly, instead of double majoring and still coming out somewhat narrow, despite the “outside of major” requirement. (Question: Do we have a higher number of double majors than other SUNY institutions?)

- Glad we are affordable for students who seem to appreciate their educations—less sense of entitlement than many college students nationally, though we discovered this differed at the College by discipline. We do want to keep our sense of “open access,” but feel there’s a move towards elitism. Don’t feel we can sustain that. Some disagreement on this point—we can get good students by moving past the boundaries of our region. We need to keep saying to MCC and GCC and high schools: students need to be better developed before they get here. We need to build relationships with those educators to get on the same page. It seems wrong to some that we’re pushing to be something other than our regional self—to become a national institution. On the other hand, we would have to shrink, have a much smaller population of students, if we don’t stretch outside our region. We need to be more realistic about what we can offer and marketing ourselves in that way.

- We need to be more flexible with students: e.g. for students who have to work all the time.

- We feel students and their culture are changing—it’s about instant gratification, what can you do for me, etc. The idea of education itself is becoming a commodity. Students see online as the **EASIEST** way to get a degree. The liberal arts degree is nationally devalued by online “packages.” We are playing into that by buying so fully into assessment and making quantitative that which is qualitative. Are we a product? Should we continue to market ourselves as a product? To promote ourselves by these assessment numbers? But that is for parents/the bill payers. What students want is to be comfortable.

- Re: student services: if anything, we should increase these in order to service the potential population we have. APS doesn’t seem to have the weight that it should. Should be a 3-credit course. Add papers, consequences.

- What we provide is time and modeling—a certain way of thinking and being—that can't be done online. We **shouldn't** though we probably will have to compromise and do some online work. Good for extremely motivated people who want to learn. It's not the right pedagogy for everyone. We need to defend that education takes time and experience, even when we have to meet them on their own terms of short-time and no-face-to-face experience (online, twitter, etc.). Interaction with each other and the educator. Hybrid courses would be better than fully online for these reasons.

- Commitment to international education seems to be ambivalent: now they only have one semester required. But we think we should get more students to study abroad. Do we want our students to be citizens of the world? If you can't be a citizen of the world, you will be in a minority in the future.

SUMMARY: agreed to a moderate set of views: some but not all online learning; access but not totally open access; student services but also academic excellence.