

December 26, 2008

TO: Susan Kress, VPAA

FROM: Terry Diggory, Chair, Center Study Group

RE: Center Study Group Update

This is the third of a series of updates stipulated in the timeline accompanying your charge to the Center Study Group (CSG). The period covered by the present report was relatively brief, due to the Thanksgiving break and the end of the semester. Nevertheless, CSG feels significant progress has been made toward the compilation of the preliminary report due to you at the end of February.

In a continuing effort to gather perspectives on the possible functions of a Center at Skidmore and the reception of Centers beyond Skidmore, CSG held separate meetings with Bill Tomlinson, Director of Sponsored Research, and Barry Pritzker, Director of Foundation and Corporate Relations. CSG member Mary Ann Foley conducted a telephone interview with Peter Felten, founding director of the Teaching Center at Elon University, about their innovative program of faculty writing seminars. On November 21, CSG hosted an open forum as a follow-up to the series of focus groups conducted in October. The open forum was attended by over 25 faculty members plus administrators from Academic Staff and IT. It provided a valuable opportunity for faculty to share ideas about faculty development and for CSG to inform faculty about its work.

Toward the beginning of the spring semester, CSG plans to meet with Phyllis Roth about her research on retirees and with Sarah Goodwin about assessment plans. We also project some form of consultation with CAPT about faculty development needs as they reveal themselves in the profiles of candidates who come up for CAPT review. Plans are proceeding to send representatives to conferences at Wabash College in March and in San Diego (for an AACU event) in April.

CSG's major focus in spring semester, however, will be preparing the preliminary report due in February, disseminating that report in appropriate forums, and gathering responses. This process will lead to the final report due at the end of April. To help with this work, we may require staff support to replace Chris McGill, who ably supported CSG until her retirement at the end of November.