Recorder’s Summary

Forum date: January 30, 2017
Table number: 11

Key points and ideas that emerged from table discussion (bulleted list of 5-10 points with a couple sentences of description for each):

- **The most important attributes that should characterize U of M graduates and be addressed in a new curriculum are knowledge, perspectives, and virtues.**
  - CLA has 10 competencies (actually called “career” competencies) – *critical thinking* could be one of those competencies, the things that help students get a job once they leave here. Small liberal arts colleges are under a lot of pressure – what do you get with the degree? Most people who have a STEM field have liberal arts in their background.

- **The curriculum should be designed with a recommitment to stronger ways of knowing.**
  - For example, going deeper into actually applying the subject matter for students to obtain a deeper learning and a stronger knowledge.
  - Classes are not supposed to be taught by grad students, yet they are *always* taught by grad students.
  - In the social sciences, you should have some form of where the students are manipulating data. Examples were given where some instructors explain the quality of media (i.e., Google, YouTube), whereas other instructors do not. However it was cautioned that instructors should be careful about voicing what is valuable and what is not to students.

- **You cannot take budget out of this picture.**

- **It is important that faculty teaching Liberal Education courses have conversations with other faculty about the curriculum.**
  - There should be a “Boot Camp” for faculty - a capstone of sorts where the different disciplines work on different projects, similar to a grand challenges experience.
  - Perhaps think about having a guest lecturer for faculty

- **Reflections on Liberal Education curriculum**
  - The course ‘Mathematical Thinking’ could be tweaked/renamed ‘Computational Math’ or ‘Mathematical and Computational Thinking.’
  - It is problematic that CLA is the only college where there is a language requirement. Why is this? However, would a change in language requirement impact those who transfer into the U of M?
  - With Themes – Keep in mind students think of these lists more like a check-off --- they don’t necessarily connect themes with core classes.
Additional context (characterize level of consensus/lack of consensus, tone and tenor of conversation, other notable aspects of the discussion):

It was a respectful conversation. The faculty represented was very passionate in their beliefs. There was general consensus on most issues. The only lack of consensus was around the origin of the word “liberal” in the beginning of the discussion. What does the word really mean, and that definition in relation to Liberal Education?