TO: Bill Wright
FROM: Tim Wilson
DATE: November 5, 2004
RE: Student Life Program Review Plan
CC: Jane Higa, Stu Cleek, Dana Sanders, Dana Alexander, Elena Yee

BUILDING ON THE PAST

An Irvine Grant funded a retreat in June, 2000, that helped Student Life launch a four year effort to reshape our vision while examining departmental contributions to the six newly adopted learning standards (Diversity, Written and Oral Communication, Critical Interdisciplinary Thinking, Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement, and Technology). The time was spent reviewing five documents as a stimulus to writing a mission statement for Student Life:

In addition, each department was asked to identify current efforts that contributed to the learning standards as well as envisioning new ways to make contributions.

In November, 2000, Student Life invited higher education consultant Dr. Russ Rogers to act as a facilitator to continue the work of crafting a mission statement and identifying specific sought outcomes. This work was followed by another retreat in May, 2001, that focused on crafting the specific language in the Student Life Mission Statement.

The Student Life Division exists as a partner with faculty to accomplish the educational mission of Westmont College.

To this end, we are committed to:
- Be actively aware of students’ college experiences and seize every opportunity to assist students in processing and reflecting upon those experiences. (ENGAGEMENT)
- Design, facilitate, and inspire beyond-the-class learning experiences and environments. (ENVIRONMENT)
- Provide excellent services that enrich and support students’ academic, social, spiritual, physical, and emotional needs and development in the context of God’s calling for their lives. (SERVICE)

In fulfilling this commitment and as we model our faith in Christ, we dedicate ourselves to: practicing dialogue and interactions infused with humility, intelligence, goodwill, candor, respect, patience, and justice; contributing to a campus ethos where both individuality and community are valued; revering creativity and possibility; affirming the sacredness of each God-given moment and person.
INTENDED OUTCOMES

Over the next few years, we have had the opportunity to meet on our own and with Dr. Rogers to breathe life into our Mission Statement. Most recently, we have identified intended outcomes and examined our organizational structure to better insure that our efforts are directed towards these outcomes. The aspects of ENGAGEMENT, ENVIRONMENT, and SERVICE from our Mission Statement were viewed as the means or the strategies that are available to each department as it seeks to purposefully move students toward these three outcomes:

1. Students will learn to appreciate and contribute to a redemptive community that celebrates the diversity that surrounds us.
2. Students will learn to successfully navigate change in their lives.
3. Students will learn to become proactive change agents, evidencing a “value added” understanding of leadership.

Embedded within these outcomes are four of the college’s learning standards:

1. Diversity
2. Critical-Interdisciplinary Thinking
3. Christian Orientation
4. Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement

At a later date, we will look for ways that the Technology learning standard could contribute to the three intended outcomes.

PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES

Student Life is using this model to describe how each of our departments (e.g. Residence Life, Office of Life Planning, Counseling) can intentionally use ENGAGEMENT, ENVIRONMENT, and SERVICE to impact specific target populations (e.g., first year, women, students of color) in a way that moves them toward our three intended outcomes (redemptive community, navigate change, “value added” leaders).
Measuring progress toward our intended outcomes is behind the Program Review effort of the college. It will be difficult to show a direct relationship between the various aspects of ENGAGEMENT, ENVIRONMENT, and SERVICE and our listed outcomes. Surveys (e.g. NSSE, alumni, senior) will show impacts of the entire college’s collective efforts. Such surveys will be helpful to determine particular areas of concern and other areas to celebrate. Program specific evaluations and focus groups are other ways to seek feedback on our efforts.

Two examples on the use of data:
1. Retention rates of entire student body and students of color as a measure of student satisfaction.
2. Alumni survey report that Westmont had little impact on awareness of ecology issues could be a baseline for future improvements.

Sample Questions for Programming Feedback Forms
1. Did the points of view presented cause you to understand and consider alternative positions?
2. What aspects of your faith were deepened as a result of considering the issues this evening?
USE OF RESULTS

The interpretation of the data, surveys, and other assessment tools will be evaluated by each department and summarized in the year-end reports. These results will shape the ways ENGAGEMENT, ENVIRONMENT, and SERVICE will be used in the upcoming year.

FLOW CHART

GENERAL
- Mission Statement
  - Engagement
  - Environment
  - Service

SPECIFICS
- Departmental Planning
  - Goals/Objectives
  - Learning Standards

Intended Outcomes
1. Redemptive Community
2. Navigate Change
3. "Value Added" Leaders

Assessment
- Specific evidence of student change (surveys, evaluations, focus group)