DATE: September 21, 2009

TO: Ray Rosentrater

FROM: Deborah Dunn

RE: Mayterm 2010 GE Proposal: Serving Society

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This is to follow up on the submission of the Mayterm 2010 Conflict and Reconciliation Narratives for GE credit in the category of Serving Society; Enacting Justice. Thank you for your time (and the committee’s) in reviewing the Mayterm proposal.

You wrote that the committee was favorably disposed toward the submission, but would like some clarification on the following issues:

“The committee would like to know, however, how you will carve the necessary time for this volunteer work out of a relatively short mayterm off-campus program that seems already to have a full agenda.” The itinerary has been planned with the service component in mind. Given the short amount of time of a Mayterm, it would be impractical to have students work an hour or two a week somewhere – instead, students will do their service in one place in one burst. There are specific organizations I have in mind that are doing work with young people in economically deprived areas, and others that are doing work on projects (such as Habitat for Humanity) in the same areas. Students would do all of their service requirements within days rather than over several weeks during a regular semester. They would also spend time debriefing the experience with the community leaders in the area. This intensive service experience would serve as a springboard for many future discussions, would feature prominently in their journals and reflective exercises, and would give them a real feel for a neighborhood and the people in it. In the last several years, “conflict tourism” in Belfast has become big business – so it’s not unusual to see busloads of tourists go by in public housing projects. Our students would engage the communities in ways that most tourists and even other college students do not.

“Once approved, the GE credit for this Mayterm program should attach to a particular course. COM 133 seems to be the better choice since, as I understand your proposal, all participants will enroll in COM 133…” I will be happy to take direction from you and Bob Kuntz on the best way to handle this. I just want to avoid confusion on the part of students (who don’t always read the fine print) who then would enroll in Com 133 in an on-campus course assuming they’d get GE credit. “As a separate issue, I note that the off-campus proposal specifies that COM 133 will carry four units of credit and ART/COM 195 will carry 2 units. It would be good to clarify this in the syllabi as well.” All of the coursework is combined, in the sense that students don’t stop thinking about one course and then start thinking about another. Their actual units earned, however, are in two different courses. I think this is similar to how Europe semester is operating this fall, and is consistent with how we’ve done the Mayterm in the past.

Also, we’ve had a change. Lisa DeBoer will not be offering Art 195, but Sarah Yoder Skirpsky will help teach the Mayterm, resulting in a Com 195/Eng 195 combo.

Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.