

Tuesday, May 27, 2014

Robyn Fivush
Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Psychology
Chair, Commission on the Liberal Arts

RE: CoLA Learning through Innovation Subcommittee Report

Dear Pr. Fivush,

The CoLA Learning through Innovation Subcommittee mandate was to develop strategic goals and concrete recommendations to re-think current structures and processes in ways that will both highlight what Emory does well and what we can do better in terms of research, innovation, creativity, and discovery. We had a particular focus on: Curricular structures and processes; Infrastructure and culture for research and innovation; Mentoring; and, Cross-unit support and credit for innovation.

A full committee representative of Emory diversity was constituted and participating members were: Hiram Maxim, ECAS (Co-Chair); Jacques Galipeau, Medicine (Co-Chair); Peggy Barlett, ECAS; Dirk Brown, Alumni; Davion Ziere Colbert, ECAS Undergraduate; Martha Fineman, Law; Jeff Galle, Oxford; Jim Grimsley, ECAS; Steven Kraftchick, Theology; Rosemary Magee, Secretary of the University; Deborah Marlowe, Board of Trustees; Kira Laine Newman, SPH Graduate Student; Usha Ramakrisnan, SPH; Eve Rosenzweig, Business; and Drenna Waldrop-Valverde, Nursing.

In a series of group meetings the committee followed a process that began with SWOT analysis of innovation at Emory and identification of data needed, continued with discussion of data and emerging themes (capstone, mentoring, infrastructure) and concluded with identification of pilot projects and long-term goals.

Specific conclusions and deliverables made by our committee were that existence of, interest in, and energy for innovation is vibrant within Emory. However, there is need for structures that sustain and promote innovative energy. Substantive challenges to fostering innovation were embodied by misalignment of incentives for pursuing innovation between Faculty and Administration as well as difficulty of cross-unit scheduling.

The committee concluded that cultivation of a culture of cross-unit innovation is desirable and needs be enabled through a sustainable incubator of entrepreneurial innovation. “Pop and prestige” needs to be associated with participation in cross-unit innovation, which will serve well the interests of this initiative. In addition, effort should be made in concrete evaluation of impact of cross-unit research projects.

As a means to implement these recommendations, the Committee proposed a series of three pilot projects for further consideration by the Administration:

Project 1 – Establishment of URC-type funding to provide release time to develop cross-unit, team-based initiatives in creativity, discovery, research, and innovation. The initiative should be Faculty-led but with student input and involvement; Flexible and fluid in structure and life-cycle; Structured and supported to provide time and space (e.g., library); Outcomes-based; Structured for follow-up activities; and, Based on existing successful models: Piedmont Project; Academic Learning Communities; Global Health Institute; Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry; Critical Media Literacy Group; Center for Mind, Brain, and Culture.

Project 2 - Expansion of SIRE program to pair undergraduate (future innovators) with graduate students (current innovators) in a systematic way.

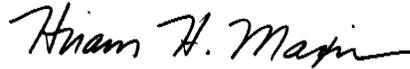
Project 3 - Facilitation of cross-unit scholarly interaction by the use of forums for interacting across units (e.g., salons, faculty dining room, “speed dating” gathering) and a clearinghouse of faculty research interests.

The committee concluded its activities on April 21st, 2014 and final recommendations contained herein were presented by Pr. Maxim to the Steering Committee of the Commission on the Liberal Arts on April 23, 2014 and then at the CoLA Spring Forum on April 30, 2014.

Sincerely,



Jacques Galipeau, MD FRCP(C)
Co-Chair CoLA Learning through
Innovation Subcommittee
*Professor of Hematology and Medical
Oncology, Pediatrics & Medicine
Emory University*



Hiram Maxim, PhD
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Subcommittee
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