

The EKI in Its First Year: a Report of the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies and the Interim Advisory Board and Interdisciplinary Fellows

The Office of Interdisciplinary Studies was established subsequent to the Grinnell College faculty's approval of the Expanding Knowledge Initiative (EKI) of the Strategic Plan in May 2005. It is charged to work with two groups: the Interdisciplinary Fellows and the Interim Advisory Board. The duty of the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies (OIS) is to catalyze and support the College's efforts to expand interdisciplinary teaching and learning. According to the EKI it will:

- Provide a campus-wide forum for the discussion of interdisciplinarity in theory and practice.
- Work with departments, individual faculty members, and the Directors of the Centers for International Studies, Prairie Studies, and Humanities to identify areas where the College's offerings would be strengthened by such courses;
- Bring faculty members together across departments to explore interdisciplinary possibilities (such as team-teaching);
- Work with departments and the Executive Council to coordinate departmental initiatives aimed at new appointments in key interdisciplinary areas;
- Assist concentrations as they work to re-envision their mission;
- Work with departments to staff concentrations, interdisciplinary, and non-departmental offerings (such as the Tutorial, Statistics, Humanities) and coordinate team-teaching opportunities;
- Coordinate college-wide symposia on interdisciplinary themes (on a biennial cycle);
- Help organize shared-theme Tutorials; and
- Design and organize the Second Year Retreat (see below).
- Develop an assessment model to guide the future development of the initiative

The EKI's goal of enhancing Grinnell College's offerings in new areas of scholarship dovetails with the Strategic Plan's call for strengthening the diversity of the faculty, increasing opportunities for rigorous inquiry-based learning, and reducing reliance on temporary faculty. These strategic goals have informed the decisions and deliberations of the Interim Advisory Board in particular.

The director of the Office reports to the Dean of the College. More information about the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies and its activities can be found on the Dean of the College's website, under academic programs:

<http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/dean/eki/officeinterdiscstudies/>.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE INTERDISCIPLINARY FELLOWS

The Interdisciplinary Fellows' obligations are to teach interdisciplinary courses (see Appendix), advise the Director of the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies on bringing speakers to campus and planning a Retreat for Second Year Students. The first group of Interdisciplinary Fellows was recommended for appointment by the Interim Advisory Board and the Executive Council in the fall semester.

In November 2005, the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies began working with the newly-appointed Interdisciplinary Fellows Jin Feng, Bob Grey, and Clark Lindgren on planning the Retreat for second year students. The Fellows, Marci Sortor and Ada Norris and SGA representative Chris Ochoa met with groups of students and the Joint Board and the SGA Academic Affairs Committee, and consulted with Joyce Stern and Ann-Gansemer-Topf regarding their research on second-year students. They also met with other members Student Affairs and faculty members involved in this past year's POSSE retreat. The Office of Interdisciplinary Studies secured a modest grant from the ACM Engaging Studies in the Liberal Arts initiative, which allowed Ada Norris to visit the Beloit, Monmouth, Ripon, and University of Chicago campuses to discuss programs for second year students. A draft of her report, which is awaiting information regarding a visit by Julie Stockenberg scheduled for this summer, is appended to this document.

At present, the timing, location, and main activities of the retreat have been planned. The retreat will take place on the second weekend of Fall Break, Oct. 20-22. It will take place at a scenic location in Boone, Iowa. Students will discuss their goals for their college education and for their lives after college, explore the meaning of a liberal arts education, and have the opportunity to reinforce existing relationships with each other, and with faculty and staff members and to develop new relationships. They will be led in a creative group project and community-building activities by Ogden sculptor David Williamson, and have some free time to enjoy the setting of the retreat. Information about the retreat has been released to students and faculty members. The key note speaker has been identified (Ira Strauber) and the Fellows are discussing the possibility of bringing an artist to work with the students. During the summer, many of the logistics of the retreat should be worked out.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE INTERIM ADVISORY BOARD

In this first year of the implementation of the Expanding knowledge Initiative, the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies and the Interim Advisory Board (IAB) found its task challenging, exhilarating, and not a little daunting. Simply defining its charge and how it would go about fulfilling that charge took a number of lengthy discussions. Furthermore, the IAB found itself unsure as to how to begin its tasks: how could one discuss developing new areas of teaching and research before one sorted out models of teaching? How could one pursue interdisciplinary appointments before one had sorted out the relationship of these positions to the existing governance structure and how individuals in these positions would be mentored and reviewed? How would the IAB envision developing new areas of interdisciplinary learning before doing the work of

reenvisioning our long-standing interdisciplinary concentrations? As the IAB struggled with these questions, it was painfully aware that the Executive Council would receive the first set of EKI-related position proposals in the spring. How could the IAB assist the Executive Council as it deliberated on these position proposals? How could it ensure that this year of proposals was a positive step forward in the realization of the goals of the EKI and not a source of frustration for faculty members?

Faced with needing to move so many elements forward together at the same time, the IAB's progress at first seemed slow. Over time, the momentum built, and the list of accomplishments is, I think, a testimony to the creativity, resolve, and hard work of the members of the IAB.

IAB and OIS accomplishments for 2005/06:

- Identified goals and activities for the year
- Reported to the faculty, Executive Council, Trustees, and SGA Joint Board and SGA Academic Affairs on a number of occasions
- Clarified the relationship between the IAB and the faculty, and the IAB and the Executive Council (particularly in light of EKI-related position proposals)
- Developed "Guidelines for Developing New Areas of Study" (see link)
- Developed "Guidelines for New Faculty Positions" (see link)
<http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/dean/eki/facultyresources/>
- Recruited and recommended candidates for Interdisciplinary Fellows
- Surveyed departments and concentrations regarding interdisciplinary activities and interests
- Met with representatives from concentrations and began work on an area studies collaboration
- Organized 29 Common Grounds Interdisciplinary Lunches
- Organized 3 Teaching and Learning Lunches addressing interdisciplinary teaching issues
- Organized a summer workshop on interdisciplinary teaching (to be held August 2006 and facilitated by Wayne Moyer and Sam Rebelsky)
- Met with and provided feedback to Policy Studies (Bill Ferguson), Humanities (Tyler Roberts), American Studies (Henry Rietz and Karla Erickson), BIO/GDS (Jack Mutti and Peter Jacobson), ENV (David Campbell and Jon Andelson), and Middle Eastern Studies (Kathy Kamp)
- Reviewed and reported to the Executive Council on position proposals
- Submitted to the Executive Council a proposal regarding interdisciplinary faculty appointments, and the means by which these would be mentored and reviewed
- Identified areas for possible expansion or development (and faculty appointments)
- Worked with a faculty group (Jon Andelson, David Campbell, Charles Cunningham, Kathy Kamp, and Lee Sharpe and IAB members Wayne Moyer and Monty Roper) to develop a successful proposal for two positions in Geography and Earth Science (IAB Geo proposal on the grey bar at link listed here)
<http://www.grinnell.edu/offices/dean/eki/officeinterdiscstudies/>

The Charge: Facilitating Discussion and Making Connections

The Expanding Knowledge Initiative envisioned that identifying new areas for curricular development and faculty appointment would be a grass roots effort. We understood that an important part of the role of the Interim Advisory Board and the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies was to facilitate campus discussions about the nature of interdisciplinary teaching and learning and help individuals and groups identify potential areas of curricular development. Regarding the first task, in the fall semester we distributed information about interdisciplinary teaching and organized a lunch on this topic. During the spring semester, we organized two additional lunches addressing team-teaching. Jin Feng, Liz Queathem, Steve Andrews and Vince Eckhart did a wonderful job describing their respective courses and identifying key issues linked to team-teaching interdisciplinary courses. As a follow-up to these lunch discussions the OIS organized a summer workshop on interdisciplinary course design. Wayne Moyer and Sam Rebelsky will serve as its facilitators.

Regarding the second task, the IAB came up with a brilliant idea: Common Interdisciplinary Grounds lunches. These lunches provided faculty members with an opportunity to identify others who shared similar teaching interests. Some IAB members also organized lunches on topics that the Board had identified as good candidates for curricular development. These lunches were funded by the Instructional Support Committee and organized by the OIS. They proved to be very successful: 29 lunches (some topics were treated in multiple lunches, and three were organized without providing lunch) were held over the two semesters and led to the development of a number of summer faculty workshop proposals in addition to the OIS-organized summer workshop on course design. Six of these proposals have resulted in scheduled workshops. (link listed here)

http://www.grinnell.edu/dean/facdev/summer_2006_workshops.pdf

Faculty members have responded positively to the opportunity that the lunches provide; clearly, they are able and willing to take on the challenge of thinking about what they can bring to the Expanding Knowledge Initiative and the curricular opportunities that it offers. Their discussions have played an important part in helping the IAB identify a number of exciting and potentially fruitful areas of curricular expansion. The IAB proposes to continue this program another year.

Other strategies for opening dialogue among faculty members regarding the EKI included a department-level survey of teaching interests and meeting with representatives of the concentrations.

The Charge: Identifying Areas of Curricular Development and Advising the Executive Council on EKI-related Faculty Appointments

At the outset of this discussion, it is important to note that the IAB fully expects that over the next few years these areas will develop further, new areas will emerge, and some will be set aside in favor of others. What follows is a discussion of the state of campus discussion and action at the end of the first year of the EKI.

AREAS FOR CURRICULAR EXPANSION

The Common Interdisciplinary Grounds lunches provided the opportunity for faculty members to discuss their ideas for curricular development. These ideas ranged widely in terms of topic. They also ranged widely in terms of the form that curricular development might take: from a single course, to a group of loosely-connected courses, to new concentrations. The IAB also identified some areas for possible development, and individual members of the IAB organized lunches to ascertain their colleagues' interest in these areas. Last, upon consultation with the IAB, the director of the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies met with individual as well as groups of faculty members regarding ideas for courses, areas, and positions

The Interim Advisory Board followed these various discussions closely and explored the ways in which the several topics either overlapped with or complemented each other. Indeed, one of the remarkable outcomes of the Common Interdisciplinary Grounds Lunches was the degree of connection among their topics, and this has informed the IAB's approach to its charge to identify new areas for curricular expansion.

The Interim Advisory Board has focused on the following two "curricular hubs" for development and expansion: (1) Peace, Sustainability and Social Justice and (2) the Studio for Creative Inquiry. These conceptual hubs serve the purpose of helping the IAB and others understand the general thrust of the proposed curricular expansion under the EKI, in one case exploring the curricular possibilities of Grinnell College's strong science program combined with its long tradition of social commitment and rich curricular and co-curricular offerings on international topics, and in the other case capitalizing on the College's great potential to explore creative endeavors involving art and digital technology, considerable resources in the arts and performing arts, and faculty commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration within the humanities and between the humanities and disciplines housed in the other two divisions.

In this past year, most of the topics (or areas) explored by groups of faculty members have easily fit into one of these two hubs. Indeed, the IAB and others have been excited about the degree to which the different areas explored could have connections with each other, offering the potential for further collaboration and, in the case of EKI-related appointments, the possibility that particular appointments might facilitate more than one area. This is especially the case for the areas sharing the same hub, but there are cases of potential cross-hub overlap and integration as well.

As was the case for the topics of discussion of the Common Interdisciplinary Grounds lunches, the IAB believes that the means for curricular expansion are several (as can be seen in the discussion of the hubs below). In each case, the IAB sees great potential for interconnections among departments, concentrations, and individual faculty members.

What follows below is an account of the areas associated with Peace, Sustainability and Social Justice and the Studio for Creative Inquiry in their current state of development. Existing College resources are listed at the beginning of each description.

Peace, Sustainability and Social Justice

Existing resources: CERA, Noyce Science Center, Center for Prairie Studies, Center for International Studies, Center for the Humanities, Rosenfield Program, Global Development Studies, and Environmental Studies, Peace Studies Program, and Community Service Office, Lilly-funded initiatives

This hub addresses issues related to human and environmental well being and their interconnection. Areas for exploration include:

- Peace and conflict, from personal to international scales
- The sustainability of social, political, environmental, and economic systems, from local to global scales
- The allocation of natural resources and how human activities and environment affect each other
- Human rights

This hub promises many fruitful opportunities to integrate a range of areas of scholarly investigation, including:

- Geography (the search for a geographer will begin this fall semester) – to be housed in an existing department
- Earth Systems Science (the search for an earth systems scientist will begin this fall semester) – to be housed in an existing science department
- Global Development Studies – an existing concentration
- Environmental Studies – an existing concentration
- Ethics –particularly in connection to environmental issues and global development issues
- Policy Studies – discussions are underway for a new concentration
- International Relations
- Middle East Studies – a faculty summer workshop is organized for this summer
- Religion and Politics – three Tutorials will be offered on this topic next fall
- Genocide and Holocaust Studies – a faculty summer workshop is organized for this summer

Co-curricular elements such as internships and community service, off-campus study and courses with a travel component could be important contributors to students' interdisciplinary education in many of these areas.

Studio for Creative Inquiry

Existing Resources: Bucksbaum Center for the Performing Arts, Center for the Humanities, Center for International Studies, Prairie Studies Center, Creative Computing Lab, Falconer Gallery and Print and Drawing Study Room, CERA, and Cultural Education Center

This hub would serve as a focus for the exploration of creative scholarship in the arts, and among the arts, humanities, and the sciences and social studies. Linked to this hub are a

number of exciting initiatives: Arts in Practice, Integrative Humanities, Inter-Arts Initiative, Visual Culture and New Media

Arts in Practice and Inter-Arts Initiative

Arts in Practice addresses the implementation and practical application of art. This topic probably would function best as a loose configuration of courses. It could comprise art-science and art-social science pairings. It could also offer an opportunity for collaboration among faculty in the fine and performing arts. This subject could comprise a co-curricular component more easily than most of the other areas we are examining: with internships at museums and a semester at the Boston Architectural Center being the most apparent at the moment.

The *Inter-Arts Initiative* has not yet received much discussion, but department surveys indicated a good deal of interest for collaboration among the arts faculty. This area could support exciting collaborations in performance art, as well as fruitful team-teaching among historians of art, music, and dramatic literature. A summer workshop will develop this topic.

Integrative Humanities

In a number of venues, the humanities faculty have expressed the desire to teach interdisciplinary courses such as comparative literature and film, and core humanities courses that would focus on ideas and issues of cultural importance in particular places and times. These might include the old stand-bys (if they survive): HUM 101, 102, 131, HUM/SOCSTU 140, etc. Other courses exploring some of the connections mentioned above could follow as interest develops. Introductory and intermediate-level offerings will be important for allowing students to develop real interdisciplinary expertise and broadening the number of students able to take the most advanced of these courses. Such courses also are likely to help recruit students as majors in the various humanities disciplines, including the languages.

How It Might Look

This is an initiative that may be most successful as a loose configuration of courses, where the most important organizational structure lies with the participating departments, so that, for example, a humanities course on twentieth-century Berlin that could count toward both the Art and the German (Studies) major.

Possible titles, taken from a Humanities Core Common Grounds lunch and ensuing conversations, and the Art department's response to the IAB's teaching survey include:

- Culture of Twentieth-Century Berlin (ART & GRM)
- Venetian Culture (ART & MUS)
- Japanese Modernism
- Culture of Nineteenth-Century Europe
- Museum Studies
- Comparative theater: Baroque and Neoclassical Theatre in Britain and France (THE & FRN)
- Comparative theater: Restoration Comedy and Molière (THE & FRN)

- Roman Theatre and its French Descendants: From Seneca to Racine, and from Plautus to Molière (FRN & CLS)
- Comparative novel: The Epistolary Novel in England and France (FRN & ENG)
- Philosophy of Science (PHI & PHY)

The aim would be to offer a certain number of HUM, HUM/SOCSTU, and HUM/SCI courses each semester. At present, HUM seems to offer fertile grounds for 195, 295 and 395 offerings. In addition to HUM 101, 102, 140 and 131, the catalogue lists a HUM 250 “The Arts, Humanities, and the Internet.” During the 2005/06 academic year, 9 regular humanities and 4 Special Topics humanities courses were offered.

Fall 2005

HUM 101 (3 offered F’05)
 HUM 131 (not offered this year)
 HUM 195
 HUM 295

Spring 2006

HUM 101 (4 offered S’06)
 HUM 102 (1 offered S’06)
 HUM/SOCST 140 (1 offered S’06)
 HUM 395 (2 offered S’06)

Logistics

Positions facilitating the other hubs could also free up faculty members to offer courses in the Humanities Core.

Two issues must be considered in developing this area. While they add some complexity to its implementation, they are far from insurmountable: (1) in many cases, faculty members want to team-teach; (2) the small size of many humanities departments and the absence of abundant general education offerings. Both of these pose problems for staffing these courses and for going about adding faculty to facilitate them. Some considerations that may help us sort these problems out include:

- The staffing impact of team-teaching is likely to be less profound than it might seem at first glance. Some of these courses will count toward majors and so will not be net losses to departments (though they may require a revisiting of departmental offerings). An old example of this sort is Humanities 140, which can count toward the history major, or the MAP seminar “Space and Place in Europe and the Mediterranean,” which counted toward both English and History majors. At least two courses now in the planning phase will count toward one or both majors.
- A number of departments in the humanities already contribute to the current HUM offerings. To the extent that these are revisited or demand for them lessens once we have additional new offerings, there may be some flexibility (especially with a new appointment who could contribute to HUM 101, 102 or 140).

Visual Culture/Film and New Media Studies

A number of institutions of higher education are developing programs in visual culture. The IAB hopes that such an area would take a distinctive approach by bringing digital technology fully into the study of this topic. It has been argued that the

print culture that emerged with the invention of the printing press at the end of the fifteenth century is giving way to a resurgence in a visual culture. Television and movies in the twentieth century, and increasingly interactive digital technologies in the late twentieth century as well as in this century, have transformed the possibilities for communication, community building and identity formation, recreation, and work. Areas that could be addressed include:

- Film, radio and television; the media, their social and cultural implications; film-making and other media production
- Digital art, music, and other performance arts
- Communications: web, digital telephone
- Interactive computer technologies and their applications (communications, games, domestic surveillance and spying)
- The Web (information and disinformation dissemination, community formation, the way we work)
- Cultural, political, legal, and social implications on all of this
- Globalization and the WWW

This initiative requires contributions from all three divisions, with a strong infusion from the science division, especially in computer science (and perhaps psychology).

Expectations and Recommendations for 2006/07

Several initiatives begun in the Common Interdisciplinary Grounds Lunches and pursued in subsequent discussions and summer workshops are likely to produce proposals for new courses, concentrations, and faculty positions. It is highly likely that proposals will emerge from some of the EKI-related summer workshops.

The IAB also expects to work through the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies with faculty members on the following possible areas.

1. Integrative Humanities. This is discussed in detail above. There is considerable interest in doing something in this area, and it has been discussed in a number of Humanities division meetings. The IAB intends to work with a small group interested in this area with the goal of refining its vision, exploring ways to include faculty colleagues from outside of the Humanities, and identifying solutions to related staffing issues. Working through the issues of team-teaching as well as resolving related departmental staffing issues should serve as a model for other initiatives.
2. Inter-arts. A summer workshop will undoubtedly move this area forward significantly. The IAB has noted the considerable energy and creativity demonstrated in a number of arts-related discussions (visual culture, cultural studies, inter-arts, arts in practice).
3. Environment. The IAB and OIS hope to begin discussions with a group of faculty members regarding whether the College should expand its offerings related to the environment. Existing faculty members have interests in expanding

offerings in environmental science, and there is also interest in exploring issues such as environment and ethics. Again, the IAB envisions that within a year or two, there could be an exciting initiative in this area.

The IAB recognizes that, should many proposals emerge in the second year of the EKI, a number of individuals and groups might feel frustrated. The IAB is also desirous that those who need some time to develop their ideas and sort out staffing and other issues remain confident that good proposals will continue to be entertained in subsequent years. Patience, good will, and a willingness to discuss ideas with other groups and with the Dean's Office and the IAB are essential for the best conclusion of the EKI's goals.

Budgeted Faculty Increases Related to EKI (by year of appointment)

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1 (Chemistry/diversity; not filled)	2 (Geography, Earth Systems Science)	3	3	3

Strategies for Implementing the Expanding Knowledge Initiative

The Interim Advisory Board contemplated a number of different approaches for implementing the EKI. It did so in terms of three scenarios: Scenario A maximizes the opportunities for existing faculty members to teach interdisciplinary courses, Scenario B emphasizes strategic development or expansion of curricular areas, and Scenario C relies on existing interdisciplinary entities (namely, the centers) as foci for developing the College's interdisciplinary offerings.

In order to clarify the differences among them, they are outlined in their most extreme application. In practice, there could be considerable overlap among the three scenarios. The IAB's recommendation, which appears below on page fourteen, draws on all three scenarios to develop new curricular areas while increasing opportunities for existing faculty to teach interdisciplinary courses and team teach.

Scenario A:

Enable every faculty member to team teach an interdisciplinary course every three years. Not all faculty members teach regular courses or carry a full teaching load (e.g. librarians, Physical Education faculty members, Writing Lab members), so this scenario assumes that 140 faculty members will wish to do this. It assumes that all faculty members will want to teach interdisciplinary courses and that all faculty members want to team teach. The need, then, would be for 93 courses' worth of staffing each year, or 18.6 FTE. In this extreme version it also assumes that the goals of the EKI are best attained only by team teaching. Shared theme courses and courses like "Research ethics" and "Statistics and research design," which are not likely to fit easily in one of the "curricular hubs" described below in Scenario B, are most likely to thrive with this scenario. In the extreme version of this scenario, faculty appointments would be driven by current needs for staffing and, secondarily, by an effort to distribute the appointments evenly across the divisions.

Implementation of this scenario could involve guaranteeing that every faculty member could teach such a course on a three-year cycle, requiring that every faculty member teach such a course on a three-year cycle, or requiring that departments supply a certain number of interdisciplinary courses each year (much as they are expected to offer Tutorials).

Advantages: This scenario has the advantage of treating all faculty members equally in providing them opportunities to team-teach, a desire frequently expressed in discussions of the EKI. In a short amount of time, the College curriculum would be enriched by many new interdisciplinary courses. Faculty would benefit from the intellectual cross-fertilization of team-teaching and developing new courses, particularly in the first few times of offering the course. New appointments would help inform the effort with recent trends in scholarship and teaching. Other goals, such as the reduction of dependence on term faculty members and supporting student research experiences could be met in departments receiving appointments.

Disadvantages and Challenges: This scenario does not contemplate whether so many faculty members will be able to coordinate their schedules so as to team teach. The FTEs will not be evenly distributed over all departments. The EKI proposed the appointment of 14, not 19, FTE. What happens if someone cannot find a teaching partner, or declines to teach such a course at first and later wishes to teach such a course (after positions have been allocated and schedules coordinating teach teaching have been worked out)? There is no mechanism for deliberately advancing the College curriculum. There is no impetus to rethink concentrations, departments, or major curricula. Some faculty members fear that this kind of approach will undermine the scholarly rigor of the College's interdisciplinary course offerings.

Scenario B

The College identifies a few areas for curricular expansion and concentrates its resources on developing these. In the extreme example, these would be areas in which no existing faculty members have competence or interest in teaching, and all fourteen new appointments would be made in these new areas (see below for a list of these areas, organized under three "curricular hubs.")

Advantages: In the extreme example, the College has the opportunity to develop its curriculum free from departmental pressures, fill in significant curricular lacunae, and set the course for the next generation. New appointments would help inform the effort with their expertise regarding recent trends in scholarship and teaching. Other goals, such as the reduction of dependence on term faculty members and supporting student research experiences could be met in departments receiving appointments.

Disadvantages: Existing faculty interest in developing interdisciplinary courses is not met. Faculty may fear that the new appointments "get to do all of the fun stuff." More than any other, this scenario calls for choices and some choices will benefit certain departments and individuals more than others.

Scenario C

The centers would organize the development of interdisciplinary course and coordinate team-teaching. The Rosenfield program might serve as a fourth organizing structure. Some members of the IAB suggested including Peace Studies as well, although at present it does not have a curricular function. Should the Executive Council recommend using the centers and perhaps the Rosenfield Program in this way, the curricular areas described above would need to be modified (this in itself, is not a bad thing). The modifications might be along the following lines:

- Prairie Studies: Peace, Sustainability and Social Justice (with GDS, ENV, and other elements) would focus on the prairie and specifically on issues of locality and place. Some elements, such as GDS, courses on the Middle East, and Holocaust Studies, would not fit well under this rubric (see Rosenfield Program below).
- Center for International Studies: None of the curricular hubs described above fit well under CIS, although elements of them would. Namely, curricular expansion pertaining to the Middle East and the Holocaust would be best administered by the CIS. Courses with a travel component, discussed below, might benefit from CIS administration as well, although not all of these would involve international travel.
- Center for the Humanities: The Humanities Core hub overlaps with the Center for the Humanities. Some elements of the Studio for Creative Inquiry could also shelter under the CH. Exactly what the effect of being organized under the CTH would have on the offerings for the Studio for Creative Inquiry is difficult to ascertain, but it would be profound.
- Rosenfield Program: A profoundly reconfigured Rosenfield Program would have the greatest overlap with the areas linked to the Peace, Sustainability and Social Justice hub. Elements linked to the cultural aspects of these areas would not fit under the Rosenfield Program well, however.
- Could a center rooted in science emerge from the HHMI grant for interdisciplinary collaboration?

Advantages: The centers are interdisciplinary structures that already play an important part on campus. They already coordinate many co-curricular activities and all of the centers have some curricular role. New appointments would help inform the effort with recent trends in scholarship and teaching. Other goals, such as the reduction of dependence on term faculty members and supporting student research experiences could be met in departments receiving appointments.

Disadvantages: Scenario C makes the existing EKI arrangements even more complex by inserting the centers as a layer in between the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies and the curricular initiatives mentioned above. This use of the centers and the Rosenfield program also calls for a significant change in their missions. Recent reviews of the three centers led the Executive Council to conclude that the different centers should continue to have different missions. While interdisciplinary, the three centers do not cover all areas of the curriculum equally. In particular, most disciplines of the science division and the performing

arts are not well represented. Chronologically, the centers focus on present concerns and only tangentially embrace other periods. The addition of the Rosenfield Program to the centers as a “fourth leg” helps expand coverage somewhat, but its policy focus keeps it firmly rooted in social studies.

Recommendations

The IAB recommends pursuing a combined version of Scenarios A and B. Decisions to expand our offerings in new and interdisciplinary areas should entail a strategic development of the curriculum with special attention being given to enabling existing faculty members to develop offerings in these areas and team teach. The degree to which the areas described above complement and overlap each other makes these twin goals highly likely. While the disadvantages of Scenario C are significant, it is clear that the centers have much to offer in terms of cooperation and collaboration with the IOS. In the upcoming year, the director of the OIS hopes to strengthen the working relationship established with the centers this year.

This approach to the Expanding Knowledge Initiative must be combined with the other faculty-related goals of EKI—enhancing the diversity of the faculty, increased opportunities for faculty-student research and other inquiry-based learning, and decreasing the College’s reliance on term faculty—as departments and other groups propose new faculty positions. The IAB hopes that such considerations will inform other position proposals as well.

OTHER POSSIBLE CURRICULAR INITIATIVES LINKED TO THE EKI

As the IAB contemplated the development and addition of interdisciplinary areas, it turned its attention by necessity to the nature of interdisciplinary courses and how they should be taught. A large part of its attention has been focused on team-teaching, but the IAB has also considered other ways in which interdisciplinary courses should be distinctive (though not unique). In particular, inquiry-based and active learning through travel, internships, and service learning tend to complement the problem-based nature of many interdisciplinary approaches. This summer’s workshop on the design of interdisciplinary courses will address these issues, but it is likely that the Board will want to explore these matters fully next year. These include the role of internships, inquiry-based learning, and service learning in interdisciplinary courses. Two elements discussed very briefly this year were courses with an embedded travel component and a remote field station supporting interdisciplinary as well as disciplinary research and teaching.

Courses with an embedded travel component

Embedded travel in courses, for 10-12 days. Trips either follow a fall semester course during winter break or take place during spring break. Preference is for two courses to partner on a trip (e.g. German language and German history). Students and a faculty member (or a team of faculty members) would combine travel and study in a way similar to the old Hewlett-funded study tours and St. Olaf’s January term.

The benefits of traveling to a location for study, whether it is Yosemite to examine travel writing, France to study the architecture of cathedrals and monasteries, Chicago

to study charitable organizations and urban poverty, or Costa Rica to study changes in environment are the enrichment of faculty members and students' teaching and learning experiences. These courses could be offered at all levels of the curriculum.

Logistics

Because such teaching and travel is costly, students would be expected to pay for travel expenses. The Center for International Studies may be a good candidate for organizing the travel and also for helping to identify a good selection of trips (perhaps including the domestic trips. Some preference should be given to team-taught travel components. Enrollments should be limited to 15 students per professor.

Procedure

Initially, the IAB could review proposals for such travel elements so that as much as possible these correspond with the EKI.

Remote Field Station

The IAB is aware that the ACM has recently closed its field station program because of low enrollments. However, there has been some discussion about how a field station might support interdisciplinary collaboration in research and teaching. Thus the aims and location of such a field station might be different than one solely devoted to scientific field study.

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

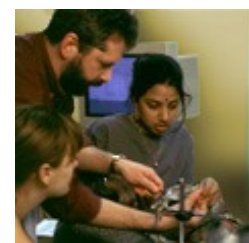
Clearly, the vision sketched out above will change in the next several months, as new initiatives emerge and as some of the ideas described here continue to develop. The IAB wishes to underscore that there is still plenty of opportunity for new initiatives to develop. The discussions and proposals of this past year should spark further ideas and discussions in the next academic year.

What remains to be done?

- In anticipation of 2008 and the fortieth anniversary of Martin Luther King's visit to Grinnell College, the Interdisciplinary Fellows will be working to encourage shared-theme Tutorials and setting the theme for the fall 2007 retreat for second year students.
- The Common Interdisciplinary Grounds lunches should be continued another year.
- Next year's activities should include bringing to campus some specialists in some of the areas listed above to work with interested groups of faculty members and students.
- The IAB will need to continue the preliminary work done this past year on re-envisioning the concentrations and issues related to the nature of interdisciplinary teaching.
- By this time next year, we have a clear idea of how we hope to expand and enrich the curriculum. This should also help solidify our plans for the bulk—but not all—of the position additions.

If the IAB, Interdisciplinary Fellows, OIS director, and our faculty colleagues do our job well, the College culture should be informed and transformed by the EKI. We are already seeing this take place in small ways, as regular (non-EKI related) proposals for faculty positions begin to refer to the EKI and as small groups of individuals begin planning for interdisciplinary courses. Still, there is much to be done in this regard, particularly in helping departments consider how their offerings can include interdisciplinary courses that are not simply additive but integral to their majors and general offerings.

This year's activities are a testimony to the energy, commitment and ingenuity of the Interdisciplinary Fellows and the members of the IAB, and of the entire faculty. I very much appreciate this opportunity to work with the faculty and particularly with the Interdisciplinary Fellows and the student and faculty members of the Interim Advisory Board on this project.



On Campus Opportunities

Support for Travel to Professional Meetings

[Faculty Travel Guidelines](#) [Form](#) [Printable Form](#)
[Travel Expense Voucher Forms](#)

Grants for Scholarship

[Grant Request Guidelines](#) [Academic Year & Summer](#) [Printable form](#)
[Guidelines for Named Chair](#) [Student Employment - Pay Categories](#)
[Scholarship Support Funds](#)

[National Endowment for the Humanities](#)

Mellon-Funded Faculty Career Enhancement

[Faculty Partnerships and Co-Mentoring](#)
[Guidelines for Faculty Workshops](#)
[Guidelines for Grinnell-Oberlin Collaborative Projects](#)
[Guidelines for Applications for Summer Stipends](#)

Freeman-Funded Faculty Development Support

[Guidelines for Requesting Faculty Development Support](#)

Curricular & Pedagogical Faculty Development

[Summer Workshop Proposal form](#) [Descriptions of Summer Workshops](#) [Summer Workshop Interest Form](#)
[Curricular Development Projects](#) [\(Grant Application\)](#)
[Support for Pedagogical Conferences](#) [Form](#) [Printable Form](#)

Faculty Leaves

[Leave Application Deadlines](#)
[Overview of Faculty Leave Programs](#)
[Guidelines for Applications for Study Leaves for Associate Professors and Professors](#)
[Procedure for Application for Research Leaves for Assistant Professors](#)
[Procedure for Application for Sabbatical Leaves](#)
[Harris Faculty Fellowship Guidelines](#)

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Office of Interdisciplinary Studies

The Office of Interdisciplinary Studies is part of Grinnell College's Expanding Knowledge Initiative (EKI) developed during our recent [Strategic Planning](#) process.

The Office of Interdisciplinary Studies supports the implementation of the EKI by facilitating interdisciplinary teaching, research and learning among the campus community. To that end, and with the help of the faculty, staff, and students of the Grinnell College community, the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies will:

- Build on the College's existing strengths in interdisciplinary teaching and research
- Organize and facilitate an annual retreat for second-year students, inviting them to explore how their course of studies can best reflect their educational and life goals
- Investigate areas of interdisciplinary learning not presently offered at the College
- Work with individuals, departments and concentrations to develop new courses
- Assist concentrations to re-envision current structures, with a view to addressing current and evolving scholarly and pedagogical needs
- Explore opportunities for new faculty positions

Office of Interdisciplinary Studies [Tentative Calendar \(PDF\)](#)

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Resources for Faculty

The Office of Interdisciplinary Studies seeks to foster discussion and to create the conditions for creative thinking and boundary-crossing collaborations that are at the heart of interdisciplinary work. This fall, we are arranging an interdisciplinary lunch series and teaching and learning colloquia. Soon, we will coordinate and provide information about speakers and workshops. Please continue to consult this website for regular updates about the ongoing implementation of the Expanding Knowledge Initiative, including the planning for the first of the Second-Year Retreats, and the development of recommendations concerning areas for emphasis in interdisciplinary studies. The Office of Interdisciplinary Studies welcomes feedback from faculty, students and staff.

- [Interdisciplinary Lunch Series](#)
- [Interdisciplinary Fellows](#)
- [Support for Teaching and Research](#)
- [Guidelines for developing new areas of Interdisciplinary Study \(PDF format\)](#)
- [Defining Interdisciplinarity for Grinnell College](#)
- [Interdisciplinary Conference \(webcast\)](#)
- [Interdisciplinarity: an Operational Definition and Assessment Plan](#)
- [Interdisciplinary Book Shelf](#)
- [Guidelines for New Faculty Positions](#)

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