

Faculty Interest Group, 2009/10 on the future of the liberal arts

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Over 130 faculty participants at four sessions (September, October, November, March)

Recommendations:

1. utilize the faculty more extensively to make the case for a liberal arts education
2. underscore the value of tenure, address the divide among the categories of faculty, and examine best practices elsewhere for the support of contingent, tenure track, and tenured faculty
3. standardize and make more transparent the tenure processes among departments and mentor tenure track faculty more effectively
4. mentor promotion candidates and potential chairs/directors more effectively; incentivize the opportunity to chair departments and direct programs
5. expand Admissions' efforts to recruit international students and expand the support for international students and faculty

Session 1: the value of a liberal arts education

- there is value in terms of the breadth of curricular offerings, the fostering and development of skills, and the appeal to prospective employers
- the uniqueness of the Skidmore brand is creativity, but is this distinctive?
- we should reach out to ~~But~~ 1

Session 3: the lives of tenure track faculty

- these faculty report being “in panic mode” regarding reappointment: they are concerned about the number not reappointed; and that criteria, expectations and processes vary from department to department and are not transparent
- are we losing faculty during the process whom we’d rather retain?
- they also perceive a lack of institutional commitment; and they try to get tenure the “old fashioned way” while the academic workplace has changed
- the tenured faculty model