MORAVIAN COLLEGE

CAT-LinC May Workshop:

Reshaping the LinC Curriculum-Revitalizing the Liberal Arts

May 19, 2015, 9:30-3:00

Location: UBC Room and the Pavilion in the HUB

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
Dr. Paul Hanstedt, Professor of English, Roanoke College,
Author of General Education Essentials: A Guide for College
(Copies available in the Moravian Bookstore)

Talk: "Liberal Education and the 'Whole Student': Moving the Words into Practice"

PAPER PRESENTERS
Bernie Cantens, Philosophy
Shari U. Dunham, Chemistry (New, In Front)
Stephen U. Dunham, Chemistry (New, In Front)
Janice Farber, Nursing
Joy Hirokawa, Music (New, In Front)
Diane Husic, Department of Biological Sciences (New, In Front)
Frank Kuserk, Department of Biological Sciences (New, In Front)
Heikki Lempa, History
Bob Mayer, Education
John Reynolds, Political Science (New, In Front)
Jim West, Economics and Business

MODERATOR, Sabrina Terrizzi, Economics and Business

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SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY

9:30-10:00 (UBC Room)
Continental Breakfast

10:00-12:00 (UBC Room)
Keynote: Dr. Paul Hanstedt, Professor of English, Roanoke College (Salem, VA), "Liberal Education and the 'Whole Student': Moving the Words into Practice"
With Question and Answer and Discussion 12:00-1:00 (The Pavilion)

12:00-1:00
Lunch

1:00-3:00 (UBC Room)
Faculty Paper Presentations and Discussion
WORKSHOP CHARGE AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

At this year’s CAT-LinC May Workshop, we plan to discuss the LinC curriculum. The heart of the new strategic plan is the liberal arts. Our mission statement calls for a “revolutionary professional educational experience embedded within and strengthened by a liberal arts education” and pillar one of the plan calls for “outstanding professional and academic experiential learning opportunities that are imbued with the liberal arts.” Though the spirit of the liberal arts pervades all four years of our students’ college experiences, the students are introduced to the spirit and substance of the liberal arts through the LinC curriculum. We believe that now is an apt time to examine and revitalize the LinC curriculum to ensure it contributes to the realization of our mission statement, which includes pillar one, as well as the entire strategic plan. The following questions will guide our discussion:

1. To what extent is the LinC curriculum successful at promoting the liberal arts as foundational to the Moravian College program?

2. What ways might the LinC curriculum be revised to better promote the liberal arts?

3. How might the current LinC curriculum help to alleviate concerns regarding the current push to add profession-oriented programs to our curriculum? If the current LinC curriculum cannot achieve this goal, how might that curriculum need to be re-shaped to alleviate those concerns?

4. How do or how should the first-year seminar work with the rest of the LinC curriculum to sustain the liberal arts foundation of the college?

5. What general education programs at other liberal arts institutions might serve as a guide or model for re-shaping LinC?

6. How might international education play a role in the revitalization of LinC?
Workshop Papers
Let's Bridge the Two Cultures

Following a recent campus email sharing a blog post by Jack Miles entitled *Why Are We Losing in the Middle East? Too Much STEM, Not Enough Humanities*,¹ there were two semi-defensive email responses, but no genuine debate or face-to-face conversation. The author of the opinion piece, speaking about America’s response to Islamist terrorism since 9/11, noted that

*American leaders might have avoided a series of horrific mistakes if they had relied a bit more on the humanities and a bit less on the STEM.*

I must admit that this post offended me. But mostly, I was disappointed that there wasn’t time for dialog.

I have sensed a growing tension between the humanities and the sciences on campus for some time. I suspect that this is due, at least in part, to all the attention and money directed at the sciences (renovations to Collier Hall of Science, the new Health Science programs, the launch of planning for a new Health Science academic building, perceived inequities in the SOAR endowment distribution of research support, etc.). Couple this with Congressional attacks on funding for the Arts and the dropping of these disciplines in K-12 public schools, I can understand the growing sense of frustration. It is part of the reason that we are having the CAT-LinC workshop entitled *Reshaping the LinC Curriculum-Revitalizing the Liberal Arts*; one of the discussion questions in the workshop announcement makes this clear:

*How might the current LinC curriculum help to alleviate concerns regarding the current push to add profession-oriented programs to our curriculum? If the current LinC curriculum cannot achieve this goal, how might that curriculum need to be re-shaped to alleviate those concerns?*

Implicit in this question (to me, at least) is a concern that profession-oriented programs cannot embody a liberal education. Furthermore, since most of these new academic programs have direct ties to the natural and physical sciences, it seems that some on campus view the liberal arts as separate from the sciences, rather than the liberal arts being inclusive of them, as was the case historically for the *Artes Liberales*.

Personally, I like the definition of a liberal education in the 21st century provided by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)

*Liberal Education: An approach to college learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. This approach emphasizes broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g., science,*

culture, and society) as well as in-depth achievement in a specific field of interest. It helps students develop a sense of social responsibility; strong intellectual and practical skills that span all major fields of study, such as communication, analytical, and problem-solving skills; and the demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings.²

Note the inclusion of science and an expectation that the broad knowledge and skills gained during a student’s education actually get applied. The essential learning outcomes of AAC&U’s Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) project includes “Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World through [the] study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts.”³ In other words, it isn’t liberal arts and the sciences, but rather a true integration that characterizes liberal education today.

A few years ago, Joyce Hinnefeld and I proposed and organized the first Arts and Lectures series on the Intersections between Art, Science, and Nature for which we brought in speakers whose work exemplified the bridging of disciplines. We concluded another such successful series this year. Along the way, I have been exploring such bridges in my own teaching and scholarship and have found that historically, there were many connections between the arts and sciences, especially in the “fields” of natural history and medicine. But over time, the collaborations faded and once symbiotic disciplines have, for the most part, gone their separate ways.

The Romantic period of the first half of the 19th century has been characterized as an intellectual movement that integrated the arts and humanities and that was heavily influenced by science and nature. The period also coincided with the Industrial Revolution, and thus, this has been described as an era of discovery of both the beauty and the terror of science. Mary Shelley wrote of her concerns of human manipulation of nature in Frankenstein (1818). In his 1829 Sonnet - To Science, Edgar Allen Poe says that science is the enemy of the poet because it takes away the mysteries of the world. He was concerned about the influx of modern science and social science of the times and how it potentially undermined spiritual beliefs. The world had entered a period where science was no longer simply trying to understand and describe nature, but was now aiming to improve upon it. And with 21st century technological advances in genetic engineering, biomedicine, and even conservation (for instance, the new efforts in de-extinction and re-wilding), the attempts to improve upon nature continue.

Towards the late 1800’s and through the turn of the century, scientists were discovering things at a record pace, unraveling nature’s secrets at both the scale of the atom and the universe. As they solved these mysteries, some of the world’s

most prominent of scientists of all time remained ever cognizant of the beauty of what they were studying. Albert Einstein once said

_The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science._

Another nuclear physicist, Marie Curie, noted that

_“I am among those who think that science has great beauty. A scientist in his laboratory is not only a technician: he is also a child placed before natural phenomena which impress him like a fairy tale.”_

Perhaps ironically, both of these individuals were uncovering the fundamental mysteries of atoms and energy that would be used to create the most destructive weapon of mass destruction that has ever been used by humans. But it was also scientists like Linus Pauling (a Nobel Laureate winner of both the Chemistry and Peace prizes) who in 1958, presented to the United Nations a petition signed by 9,235 scientists from around the world protesting further nuclear testing and published the book entitled _No More War!_ And today, the American Association for the Advancement of Science has a major initiative and journal on Science Diplomacy aimed at building bridges for peace.4

There have been several points in history where scientists have realized the social and ethical implications of their research, and consequently brought their concerns to the attention of the public as well as worked to establish ethical boundaries for the applications of the new knowledge. The Asilomar Conference on Recombinant DNA in 1975 is an important example. Rachel Carson’s _Silent Spring_, heralded as a great literary piece, was also a critical social commentary and strong warning about the use of synthetic pesticides (a product of science during World War II). Not surprisingly, some in the scientific community did not welcome the book’s publication, but it led to the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and some of the first pieces of environmental legislation. The former director of the NASA Goddard Institute of Space Studies and a renown climate scientist on the faculty of Columbia University, James Hansen, has become a leading climate change activist and authored a book entitled _Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth About the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity_. There are many more examples.

Yet the fears expressed by Shelley and Poe around two centuries ago have magnified with each technological advance. In 1959, Charles Percy Snow (or CP Snow) – a scientist and author -- delivered a lecture in the UK Senate House entitled _The Two Cultures_ and subsequently published a book elaborating on his ideas entitled _The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution_. The thesis of both was that “the intellectual life of the whole of western society” was split into two cultures – namely

the sciences and the humanities – and that this division was a major hindrance to solving the world’s problems. In 2008, *The Times Literary Supplement* included the book in its list of the 100 books that most influenced Western public discourse since the Second World War. One particular excerpt, despite being written about 56 years ago, seems so relevant to the discussions and divisiveness on campus now:

*The separation between the two cultures has been getting deeper under our eyes; there is now precious little communication between them, little but different kinds of incomprehension and dislike.*

*Neither culture knows the virtues of the other; often it seems they deliberately do not want to know. The resentment, which the traditional culture feels for the scientific, is shaded with fear; from the other side, the resentment is not shaded so much as brimming with irritation.*

Stefan Collini writing in The Guardian in August in 2013⁵ observed that

*Snow had presented the contrast between the scientific and literary cultures as being in part about different responses to the industrial and technological revolutions.*

This contrast was also described by Peter Dizikes writing in the New York Times in 2009⁶ on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Snow’s lecture:

*Scientists, he asserts, have “the future in their bones,” while “the traditional culture responds by wishing the future did not exist.”*

I hear this idea reflected often: scientists have a tendency to think that science and technology can fix all of the world’s problems. In contrast, many in the humanities believe that technology has caused many of those problems.

In one additional 2009 essay written by Lawrence Krauss,⁷ it was noted that

*Snow argued that practitioners in both areas [the humanities or "cultures" and the sciences] should build bridges, to further the progress of human knowledge and to benefit society.*

Krauss goes on to say that Snow did not rail against religion, or any of the humanities, but rather against ignorance.

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Until we are willing to accept the world the way it is, without miracles that all empirical evidence argues against, without myths that distort our comprehension of nature, we are unlikely to bridge the divide between science and culture and, more important, we are unlikely to be fully ready to address the urgent technical challenges facing humanity.

Reading the reflections of others about C.P. Snow and the “two cultures” has only strengthened my belief that we need to find ways to reconnect these disciplines, to find ways to cross the vocabulary differences and ideological divides, to have dialog in order to better understand each other and address the critical issues of our time. The STEM disciplines are integral to a liberal education and facets of the humanities must be woven into how we teach in STEM disciplines. Given the role that science and technology must play in addressing the global challenges of the 21st century (climate change, food and water security, emerging diseases, and biosecurity are just a few examples) and the growing public distrust or denial of science (think climate change, GMOs, and vaccines), it is critically important for all students to be cognizant of the role that they may play – individually and collectively – in these future debates and solutions. How do we get students to not only think across disciplinary boundaries, but to also gain experience in debating and developing policy, translating technical information to policymakers and the public, and to think about science, not just as something hard or scary, but perhaps as a means of diplomacy? And how do ensure that future scientists continue to be aware of the moral and societal implications of their discoveries? These are the curricular discussions about liberal education at Moravian College that I think we should be having.8

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I leave you with two other random thoughts on why we need to once again integrate the disciplines in a liberal education:

In a study published last year from Michigan State University, researchers found a positive link between childhood participation in arts – especially music – to patents generated and businesses launched as adults. They studied a group of college graduates who majored in science, technology, engineering or mathematics – the STEM disciplines – and found that exposure to the arts as children increased the chances of ownership of patents or new businesses by over eight times compared to the general public. Furthermore, in their surveys, “80% of STEM professionals

8 I have written on these ideas before in a 2004 blog post (http://anewprosperity.blogspot.com/2014/03/what-fires-should-educators-light.html) and excerpt of which was published by AAC&U in their magazine Liberal Education: http://aacu.org/liberaleducation/2014/winter/husic.
report that arts and crafts deliver skills necessary for innovative work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.”

“Science needs the intuition and metaphorical power of the arts, and the arts need the fresh blood of science.”

— Edward O. Wilson
from Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge [1999]

What science-bashers fail to appreciate is that scientists, in their unflagging attraction to the unknown, love what they don’t know. It guides and motivates their work; it keeps them up late at night; and it makes that work poetic.

- Alison Hawthorne Deming
Writing the Sacred into the Real

In much of the poet Alison Hawthorne Deming’s work, she argues that the farther we remove ourselves from wild settings, the farther we are removed from our spiritual center. She believes the arts allow us to fall again “into harmony with place and each other.” We live in a world that is out of balance (environmentally, and socio-economically). Artists sense this emotionally. Scientists know this through data, but need to find ways to express this that doesn’t turn the public off through fear or distrust. Working together, humanists and scientists can find those words and the rebalancing that we need in our personal and collective lives.

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My thoughts for this paper took several different directions. I offer three different perspectives for your consideration.

*Liberal Arts as an Essential to the Artistic Process*

To say that music students are passionate is an understatement. Many of us who find ourselves in artistic pursuits do so just because of that passion. We immerse ourselves in our art. It is part of our DNA, our identity. We define ourselves as musician, dancer, artist, actor. It is our chosen lifestyle, even though we know it may not an easy one. There is so much skill to be acquired, so much time that must be devoted to practice – hours in the practice room, in the dance studio, on stage, in the art studio. With such a keen focus, who has time for general education (LinC) requirements? Why are they even necessary? We need time to do our art! [One could argue here that those in other highly skilled professional programs might feel the same way about their area of expertise.]

And yet, the most inspiring artistic presentations are often so because the artist has gone deep; because the artist is *informed*; because the artist has situated the work contextually in time and place. To do this requires broad knowledge and awareness of the world and of history. To understand an artistic representation based on literature, philosophy, or poetry requires knowledge of how to interpret writing on a deep level. The arts can often provide an avenue to understanding those not like us, but to do so requires global and cultural awareness. Of course the
technical understanding of the art form and artistic skill are essential, but without these deeper considerations, the presentation may somehow just miss the mark.

In this regard, it could be argued that LinC courses are essential to the growth and development of those studying a profession in the arts. However, it is unclear to me that our students are making this connection. LinC courses are often viewed as those pesky requirements that simply need to be met; so, who bears the responsibility to draw those connections for our students, the LinC instructors or the professional program instructors? How might we do a better job of drawing relevance, connections, and applications to the arts? Are we doing a good enough job of teaching the students how to make those connections on their own, independent of their instructors? Are there specific LinC courses that might provide more opportunities for connections than others? [A similar argument might be made for other professional programs.]

Music and Ethical Decision Making

As a teacher of future music educators, I am keenly aware of what some call the “politics of the music classroom.” Teachers of the arts are the conveyers of culture, and as such bear an enormous responsibility. Whose culture? Which culture? From what time period? Is our study primarily of dead, white, European men, or is it inclusive of the music of Asia, India, or of popular genres and groups, such as rap or hip-hop? Do we include folk songs? From which countries? What about music from various faiths? What does it mean to sing a song in another language? How do we honor the culture/faith/people from which the music comes? With limited contact time in the classroom, every musical choice is a political statement. Inclusion
in the curriculum implies value. Exclusion implies...? For music educators, these are difficult decisions. In order to make informed choices, a broad based understanding of the world and an understanding of the philosophical implications are essential. How might we bring this awareness to our music educators through the LinC program? [This argument could be extended to all our education students.]

Artistic Citizenship and Value

David Elliott (2012), music education philosopher and professor of music education at New York University, raises the question of Artistic Citizenship – how do we use music to make a positive impact on the world? He writes:

When music education is ethically guided—when we teach not only in music (i.e., to do music) and about music but also (and crucially) through music—we empower people to pursue what many philosophers throughout history consider to be the highest human values: a virtuous life well lived, a life of well-being, flourishing, fulfillment, and constructive happiness for the benefit of oneself and others (p. 22)...my statement is intended to mean that the powers and values of music and the other arts include and exceed conventional notions of art. To Dewey, the values of music (poetry, painting, dance, and so on) do not reside solely in what Westerners typically conceive as “art objects.” Rather, the values of music and other artistic pursuits are to be found in the dynamic social-experiential activities through and in which music is made, experienced, and put to work for a variety of overlapping and interweaving human purposes and benefits— practical, democratic, social, cultural, ethical, and so forth. Viewed from this perspective, music and music
education gain even more value and significance. By integrating music and music education with all aspects of social life and community, we do not forfeit music’s greatness and profundity; we fortify and increase it (p. 25).

Should we bring this profound sense of the value of music more integrally into the LinC program? Likewise, how might those studying music learn to bring what they learn in the LinC program into their own musical and professional lives, following Elliott’s ideas?

Does the term “liberal arts” sufficiently describe the Moravian College educational experience?

by Shari U. Dunham and Stephen U. Dunham, Department of Chemistry

When considering the writing prompts in the call for papers for this workshop, we found ourselves searching for (and arguing about) a clear definition of “liberal arts”. Even as former “liberal arts” students, and as teaching faculty at multiple small “liberal arts” institutions, we had difficulty agreeing on exactly what is (and is NOT) at the core of this term. While we look forward to continuing a discussion of the term “liberal arts” with other colleagues, we found that our discussions kept circling back to the unique strengths of the learning experience at an institution like Moravian College -- particularly those strengths that resonate from our own educational experiences and that we emphasize to prospective students and to potential new faculty hires. We propose that the term “liberal arts” may be insufficient and instead prefer to see conversations like these focus on the unique and critical characteristics of this learning environment. We decided to first define the strengths of a Moravian College educational experience, and then to consider how the LinC curriculum supports these strengths.

The following statement summarizes what we believe are the strengths of a Moravian College educational experience:
Moravian College is a small\textsuperscript{10}, primarily undergraduate institution\textsuperscript{11} that values the scholarship of teaching & learning\textsuperscript{12}, requires of students a breadth of academic study\textsuperscript{13}, emphasizes competency in process skills\textsuperscript{14} as equally important to competency in content knowledge, and encourages students to actively participate in the scholarship of discovery\textsuperscript{15}.

Each of the six major points in this statement is expanded in a bullet point below:

1. Moravian College is small. This means that class sizes are small (6-30), students have direct access to professors for course questions and advising, and learning methods that require more active student engagement and more frequent and diverse professor feedback are common. Small class sizes allow instructors to know each student as an individual, and invests instructors in the personalized educational experience of each student.

2. Moravian College is a primarily undergraduate institution (PUI). Students are taught by professors and not by graduate students or teaching assistants. This is true in all aspects of courses, not just in “lectures”.

3. Moravian College values the scholarship of teaching. Professors are encouraged to explore new pedagogies that support student learning. Traditional college “lectures” are not the norm here.

4. Moravian College students have time to explore before they decide on a major. The LinC curriculum provides students with a breadth of academic content primarily in their first two years of study -- to help guide their choice/s for deeper academic study (a major) and to help them develop critical process skills to serve them as life-long learners.

5. Moravian College students have the opportunity to learn more than just content. Just as important are process skills that include:
   - Critical thinking via problem solving alone and in groups
   - Working as an effective member of a group in various key roles (e.g. manager, recorder, data analyst, presenter, etc.)

\textsuperscript{10} According to Peterson’s online guide to colleges, Moravian College is currently in the very small range (>2k students) and approaching the small range (2k-7k students)

\textsuperscript{11} PUI definition in \textit{CUR Quarterly} as summarized from National Science Foundation guidelines

\textsuperscript{12} Definition of SoTL (the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) from the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

\textsuperscript{13} Learning in Common (LinC) in the Moravian College Course Catalog

\textsuperscript{14} Our understanding of process skills has come from the POGIL project and is described in this document.

\textsuperscript{15} The scholarship of discovery is one of four categories of academic scholarship in the model described by Ernest Boyer in “Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate” (1990), Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Princeton, NJ.
Presenting work verbally both informally in the classroom and formally in a conference format
Summarizing individual or group work in written format for various audiences
Creating visual representations to illustrate concepts and answer problems
Reflecting as an individual or group through self- and peer-assessment

6. Moravian College embraces experiential learning as an opportunity for students to put course skills to work in a “safe” environment where “failure” is frequent, but occurs under the watchful eye of a faculty mentor who can redirect students towards successful applications of knowledge outside of the classroom.

We believe that the LinC curriculum contributes most to the strengths in points 4 and 5 above. While students are exploring and (hopefully) connecting a breadth of academic content in the LinC curriculum, we would argue that it is the **process skills** that students practice and develop in these LinC courses that are absolutely critical to the Moravian College educational experience. We hope to promote discussion of the importance of **process skill development** both across the LinC curriculum and within the major areas of academic study.
Reflections on profession-oriented programs and our LinC curriculum

by Stephen U. Dunham, Department of Chemistry

In considering profession-oriented programs and the current or a reshaped LinC curriculum, I would like to present some thoughts for discussion.

For many years, Moravian has been fostering “profession-oriented programs” to prepare students for admission to competitive “professional” graduate programs in many disciplines (i.e. medicine, law, dentistry, physical therapy, pharmacy etc.). Certainly, anyone who has taught students that self-identify as “premed” understands that these students, while part of our “traditional majors”, are every bit as focused on a “profession” as students who enter Moravian with the goal of obtaining their certification to begin a profession as a teacher or a nurse. The major difference is that the “premed” student will need to take additional coursework to obtain their certification.

Students pursuing the new profession-oriented “Health Sciences” major will not obtain certification at the completion of their undergraduate degree, but rather will be taking courses in their major that prepare them for matriculation into a graduate program for additional professional training and certification. This aligns “Health Sciences” majors more with our “traditional majors” and differentiates them from students in Nursing and Education that are already well-established certification programs at Moravian College.
Content knowledge based competencies are not unique to “new” programs. To use medicine as an example, there are definite guidelines from medical schools about what “competencies” should be taught in the Chemistry, Biology, Math, and Physics curricula\textsuperscript{16} \textsuperscript{17}, and it would be awkward, if not impossible, to stray far from these norms and still maintain the science competencies in hopes of engaging students in a more civic based, “liberal arts” science curriculum\textsuperscript{18}. While we readily tell students “We don’t teach to the MCAT”, there is an expectation from students (and parents) that taking a Moravian course will help prepare students to meet the competencies that are assessed on the MCAT, DAT, GRE, or other graduate school entrance exam.

I think that the most critical issue for integrating any “new” profession-oriented program is to have new program administrators and full-time faculty who are invested in the Moravian College educational experience (Dunham, Paper I).

\textsuperscript{16} https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/msar/tools/351636/coursework-competencies.html

\textsuperscript{17}http://www.einstein.yu.edu/education/md-program/admissions/application-procedure/course-requirements.aspx#knowledge

\textsuperscript{18}https://www.ted.com/talks/liz Coleman_s call to reinvent liberal arts education?language=en
One of our prominent landmarks at Moravian College is the 1742 oval that sits at the center of the Main Street Campus. The oval commemorates the founding of the Bethlehem Female Seminary by Countess Benigna, daughter of Count Nicholas Ludwig Zinzendorf, in 1742 as the first boarding school for young women in the United States. Two boys’ schools were to soon follow, merging in 1759 to become Nazareth Hall. It is to these institutions that Moravian College traces its roots. Of course, the nature of the students (they were much younger) and the specific subjects that were taught in those times were certainly different from what we teach today, although we can be sure that the core curriculum of both the boys’ and girls’ schools were what we now consider to be the liberal arts—literature, history, rhetoric, languages, religion, philosophy, mathematics...and yes, science.

From the diaries of Lewis David von Schweinitz we know that science, or at least natural history, was part of what the boys learned at Nazareth Hall. von Schweinitz was the eldest son of Hans Christian Alexander von Schweinitz, the superintendent of fiscal and secular concerns of the Unitas Fratrum in North America, and his wife, Dorothea Elizabeth de Watteville, herself the daughter of Countess Benigna. Born in 1870, he showed a love of learning, and in particular an interest in botany at a young age. By the time of his graduation from Nazareth Hall in 1798 he had already catalogued all of the plants in the vicinity of Nazareth. In
addition, he was given the responsibility of teaching the subject to the younger boys as part of their course of studies.

In those days science was not something that one could pursue as a profitable career, and von Schweinitz, because of his family’s prominent place in the Moravian Church, soon left for Europe to obtain a theological education at the Moravian seminary at Niesky, in what was then the Free State of Saxony (now part of Germany). Still, he maintained his interest in natural history, and while he went on to become a prominent leader of the Moravian Church, returning first to the Moravian community in Salem, North Carolina and later as Senior Civilis in Bethlehem, he found time to publish extensively on his botanical work, so much so that he is today referred to as the Father of American Mycology (study of fungi).

It wasn’t until 1863, however, that both the men’s and women’s schools took on the characteristics of what we now think of as institutions of higher education when both were chartered to grant baccalaureate degrees. By 1888 Moravian College and Theological Seminary moved to its present location on upper Main Street and by 1892 Comenius and Zinzendorf Halls joined the original farmhouse (now Hamilton Hall) to form the new campus. The Bethlehem Female Seminary, later to become Moravian Seminary and College for Women in 1913, occupied the historic buildings on what is now our Priscilla Payne Hurd Campus on Church Street. As liberal arts colleges Moravian’s two curricula at mid-century were quite similar to that of the many other church-related institutions of the day with their primary goal of educating young men and women in the traditional arts and sciences.
We know that science continued to be part of the curriculum at this time, at least at the men's college, as two of Lewis David's grandsons, George Edmund and Emil Alexander, went on to distinguished scientific careers. George Edmund de Schweinitz (the “de” replaced the “von” after Lewis David's death) entered Moravian College in 1872, receiving his bachelor's degree in 1876 and a Master in Arts in 1878. Three years later he graduated with honors from the School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, going on to have a long and successful career teaching and writing on diseases of the eye and serving as a personal physician to President Woodrow Wilson during his several strokes. After graduating from Moravian College Emil went on to earn doctorates at the University of North Carolina and the University of Göttingen, returning to teach chemistry at then Tufts College and the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Kentucky (now the University of Kentucky) before taking a position in the Bureau of Animal Industry at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He also served on the faculty of the then Columbian University (now George Washington University), later becoming its dean. He specialized in bacteriology and immunology and studied the problems associated with tuberculosis, hog cholera and glanders.

Emil de Schweinitz’s association with the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Kentucky underscores the changing nature of American higher education during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In Lewis David's time science was still viewed as something worthy of interest and curiosity, but not as something that would lead to practical applications or be applied to solve specific problems. Ministers, in fact, were oftentimes the leading naturalists of the day as they could
study nature during the week and expound on the “wonders of the Creation” to their congregations from their pulpits on Sunday. When the Industrial Revolution began to demonstrate that the practical applications of scientific inquiry could create useful technologies, new curricula and new types of institutions of higher education began to emerge. As a result, the Morrill Act of 1862 land–grant colleges, whose primary mission was “to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanical arts (engineering),” were established across the growing country. Lehigh University, while not a public, land-grant institution, was similarly founded in 1865 as a private institution whose primary mission was to provide engineers for the mining and smelting industries of the Lehigh Valley and surrounding areas.

Moravian College, while still considering itself a liberal arts institution, responded soon after by creating its own “Scientific Curriculum” in the 1890’s. Through this “new curriculum” Moravian sought to provide a more focused Natural Science major in addition to the more classical course of study that had served its students from its inception. Classes in chemistry, physics, biology and geology formed the core of the new major. By the late 1930’s, however, the Natural Science major was phased out, being replaced by individual majors in the various natural sciences.

With the merger between the men’s and women’s colleges in 1954 a new era for science at Moravian began. Housed in the Memorial Science Building (now Memorial Hall) science enrollments continued to increase in the post-war era and new programs acquired in the merger (e.g. Medical Technology and a diploma
program in Nursing with St. Luke’s Hospital) needed to be accommodated. By the late 1960’s Memorial Hall was no longer adequate and plans for a new science building were developed, culminating in the opening of the Hall of Science (now Collier Hall of Science) in 1970. Still, the core natural science programs continued to be Biology, Chemistry and Physics, with cooperative programs in Engineering, Geology, Medical Technology and Natural Resource Management that allowed students to obtain their science and liberal arts courses at Moravian and then transfer to other institutions to finish their programs, and in some cases earn an additional Master’s degree.

The late 1970’s saw the establishment of a new major in Computer Science---the first in the Lehigh Valley (Yes, even before Lehigh!). To be sure there was opposition on the part of some faculty who thought that the major was “too applied” and not in keeping with our mission as a liberal arts college. In the 1990’s, after having established a cooperative Nursing major with Columbia University that drew few students, we re-established our relationship with St. Luke's Hospital that had lapsed in the mid-1960’s, this time creating a baccalaureate program in Nursing. And, in the 2000’s we added three new interdisciplinary programs in Biochemistry, Environmental Science and Neuroscience.

As we look to the future, new programs, in the health sciences are taking shape. How they will fit into the framework of our liberal arts mission is still to be determined. Are they too applied? Will they reflect our liberal arts character? Will they attract the type of student that we would like to have? We don’t yet have these answers. I do know, however, that science has been an integral part of the
curriculum since the founding of this “Sixth Oldest College in America” and will continue to play a major role in its future. The subject matter and how we teach it have changed over the years but its place as part of our liberal arts heritage has not.

Postscript

I would like to thank Professor Daniel Gilbert for our many conversations about the history of Moravian College, and in particular the role that science played in the development of our curriculum. Dan was a senior faculty member in the History Department when I began in 1977 and one of the “Old Guard” who successfully transitioned our institution from two separate men’s and women’s colleges into one. I’ve always loved the interplay between history and science and Dan was truly one of my mentors in helping me to understand their interplay here. I can only hope that I can be as good a mentor to my younger colleagues and Dan was for me.
The Liberal Arts as a Cultural Problem

John Reynolds

Only when the dusk starts to fall does the owl of Minerva spread its wings and fly.
G.W.F. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, “Preface”

Don't it always seem to go that you don't know what you've got til it's gone
Joni Mitchell, Big Yellow Taxi

The liberal arts cannot just be considered a curriculum; they must also be understood as a culture. In that culture, certain values must not only be celebrated but also prioritized above others. Such values are necessarily humanistic and should not be subordinated to utilitarian measures that in some inevitable way devalue the worth and dignity of those whose market value is measurably less than someone else’s. A liberal arts culture also prioritizes nonmaterial values that are not heralded by levels or types of consumption. In the culture of liberal arts, humans ought not to be reduced to the commodification of identities to be bought and sold in the marketplace. And, while a liberal arts culture must include a fundamental place for individualism and the pursuit of the paths an individual's talents might present, that culture should also avoid prioritizing paths dedicated to selfishness, narcissism and personal enrichment. In a liberal arts culture, character should matter more than wealth and it should never be presumed that the two are necessarily correlated.

A liberal arts culture must also be averse to conformity and wary of standardization. It must be resistant to language and practice that stand in conflict with its prioritized values. This is particularly true when a serious case is made to acknowledge and accommodate alternative values. Such alternative values must be kept in perspective if the liberal arts culture is to thrive rather than become at best a
prominent but no longer pre-eminent element of the College’s identity or at worst a decorative artifact used for product differentiation in institutional marketing. To illustrate the dilemma, one can identify various elements of the College’s current culture that might invite ongoing critical reflection.

1. I believe we have come to a considerable degree to conceptualize the liberal arts not as an existential approach to the world but as a set of capacities or a skill set that adds functional value to our graduates as they assume their institutional roles. I.E. our graduates will be more effective in their corporate or professional positions because they think critically, communicate well, work in teams and can be sensitive to ethical questions. In this framework, the liberal arts are valued more for their instrumental rather than intrinsic value as utility is prioritized over wisdom (a matter to be pursued through open and unfettered inquiry and discourse) or citizenship (a matter practiced through self-governance). Hence, if we maintain a general education curriculum that allows us to affirm some form of liberal learning and if we seek to infuse the right skill set into all of our students we can continue to celebrate ourselves as providing a liberal arts education. One implication of this is that it does not matter what new programs we add as long as we can graft on the program some of the liberal arts DNA that is carried by the general education program or by the incorporation of experiences that feature the skill set that has been identified as exemplary of the liberal arts.

An example of this problem is the counsel that some of our students have received as they prepare to seek employment. The caution has been sounded to
avoid putting forth strong political or social positions. Students have been counseled that as job candidates such outspokenness is to be avoided. It is imprudent to take such positions as potential employers might not welcome those who make waves even if the provocateurs take positions with which the employer might personally agree. It is better to signal a willingness to conform to the imperatives of the job or at least to be reticent to risk exposure of positions that might threaten the market and organizational relationships that have been constructed to advance the well-being of the organization in which employment is sought. Might such an aversion also have come to characterize other internal deliberations at the College?

2. As the liberal arts require attention to culture beyond curriculum, it is also useful to be sensitive where elements of the larger organizational environment are coming to bear on what we might do in the classroom. For example, the College’s plans to assemble a more standardized assessment process are a place to take note. The interest in a more standardized system of assessment derives from numerous sources (e.g. Middle States) with an understandable concern for meaningful evaluation of educational performance. If I understand correctly, however, the College’s plans include use of the data produced in the process to make decisions about resource allocation and management of the academic program. While the administrative logic of the use of such data may be evident, a system of standardized assessment can also be expected to better serve programs that can more readily quantify learning outcomes (I am assuming this will be necessary to compare across departments) and, with resource allocation
implications at issue, there is a risk that departments will see either explicit or implicit incentives to “teach” to the assessments analogous to the way that standardized testing in schools has led to teaching to the test.

When I think of the substantive implications of this concern, I am reminded of the question posed by a now retired member of the Religion Department: “How does one assess the existential value of sin and redemption?” Nothing necessarily would preclude pursuit of a substantive academic objective related to this question but comparison with other departments would require framing such a learning outcome in comparative language and with standardized indicators that might potentially disadvantage such distinctive objectives. So the process will “recommend” spending time assessing the things the resource allocators will compare.

The problem of comparison will be further complicated by the fact that many of the new programs that we have been interested in adding have outside accreditors that require specific detailed assessment as part of the accreditation program. While such assessments are well established for defensible reasons, the locus of such requirements are professional institutions for which the liberal arts might be a beneficial complement but in which the core mission is defined by technical and/or utilitarian imperatives. This observation is not to posit a reflexive critique of such institutions. Rather the observation is intended to illustrate that value systems other than those associated with the liberal arts
might well be assuming a larger role in the College and serve to incrementally subordinate the values of the liberal arts to others sets of priorities. As such external assessments are incorporated into the normal process of resource allocation, will the interest in standardization and comparison in the assessment process introduce new demands on programs for which such external processes do not already exist?

3. Another development with implications for the culture of the liberal arts is the College’s growing preoccupation with marketing and resource generation as primary criteria for organizing activity. Given the College’s financial position, the logic for enhanced marketing initiatives is in many ways compelling. Have we not come to a point, however, where marketing has become the default rationale that is used to defend initiatives as varied as new academic programs, the recruitment of international students, the elevation of technology as a hallmark of the College, the development of online courses, investment in the physical plant of the College and the formation of partnerships with external parties?

Each of such initiatives has a narrative rationale but it seems to me that, in those narratives, the rationale features primarily a utilitarian rather than the existential conceptualization of the liberal arts. Consequently, we neglect questions of how our initiatives might impact our culture beyond the need to staff, house and recruit for new programs rather than what might those programs do to the values that underlie the liberal arts or the capacities of the faculty to maintain and impart those values. In this situation, an important
element is the need to examine if there has been a de facto incremental shift in the expectations of how faculty time is spent moving away from teaching, mentoring and scholarship towards the performance of administrative tasks. Perhaps the arrival of the new Provost will allow for some more reflective consideration of such issues.

*The percentage you are paying is too high priced while you’re living beyond all your means and the man in the suit has just bought a new car from the profit he’s made off your dreams.*

Steve Winwood, *The Low Spark of High Heeled Boys*
Moravian’s General Education and The Liberal Arts

An Inquiry Process That Promotes Fallibilism, Open-Mindedness, and Respect for Truth

Bernie Cantens

While reflecting on Moravian College’s general education program (LINC) and how we might revise LINC to better promote the liberal arts, it occurred to me that we could begin by focusing on the inquiry process because it is something that is shared among all disciplines. In this essay, I propose one way of enhancing the liberal arts by promoting an inquiry process that encourages fallibilism, open-mindedness, and respect for truth.

Let me begin with a citation from Association of American Colleges and Universities’ statement on liberal learning: “A Liberal education requires that we understand the foundations of knowledge and inquiry about nature, culture and society; that we master core skills of perception, analysis, and expression; that we cultivate a respect for truth; that we recognize the importance of historical and cultural context; and that we explore connections among formal learning, citizenship, and service to our communities.” I would like to call attention to a few of the central ideas mentioned: (1) the foundations of knowledge; (2) an inquiry about nature, culture and society; and (3) cultivating a respect for truth.

The ideas concerning the foundations of knowledge, inquiry, and truth are conceptually interconnected and have been central themes in philosophical discourse since the time of Socrates. Indeed, one could argue that they represent the heart of philosophy and their study corresponds to the central philosophical branches of epistemology and metaphysics. My focus in this essay is the inquiry
process and how some of the philosophical notions associated with it can enhance the liberal arts at Moravian College.

It is not only important what we do and why we do it, but also how we do it. Therefore, it is not only important what we learn and why we learn it, but how we learn it. How should we approach the learning process? One important answer to this question lies in the study of logic. Aristotle constructed the first complete system of logic known today as categorical syllogistic logic. The purpose of Aristotle's logic was to create a method that would allow us to use our evidence systematically so that we could distinguish valid from invalid arguments. This tool, which Francis Bacon refers to as the “instrument of science”, is a closed system that guarantees that if the premises of an argument are true then the conclusion of the argument follows necessarily. The purpose of logic, then, is to function as a method of inquiry that can help us distinguish mere beliefs (i.e., opinions) from knowledge (i.e., evidentially supported beliefs). Since the time of Aristotle, there have been many new developments in the field of logic that today constitute an essential part of a well-grounded and evidentially-based inquiry process. For instance, we now have propositional logic, first-order quantification logic (or predicate calculus), and higher-order logics. But logic must have a common foundation; if so, it could also serve as a foundation for the inquiry process in general.

The American philosopher and founder of American Pragmatism, Charles Sanders Peirce, investigated and searched for such a foundation. He argued that the first rule of logic and the foundation of the inquiry process could be summarized as follows: “to want to know the truth”. In his 1898 Cambridge Conferences at Harvard
University, he claimed that to be a good teacher one first has to be a good learner and to be a good learner one first must have “the will to learn”. Peirce explains:

Upon the first, and in one sense this sole, rule of reason, that in order to learn you must desire to learn and in so desiring not be satisfied with what you are already inclined to think, there follows one corollary that deserves to be inscribed upon every wall of the city of philosophy.

Do not block the road of inquiry.ii

Peirce thought that this first rule of logic was the most essential attitude a truth seeker should have and sustain in and throughout serious scientific and philosophical inquiries. It was, in a sense, to “respect truth,” insofar as one always maintained a certain distance between propositional beliefs and ultimate and absolute truths. According to this attitude, all beliefs that are a part or a result of theoretical inquiries should be treated as hypotheses; they should always be under scrutiny and analysis. These ideas developed into Peirce’s doctrine of fallibilism, which states that we should always sustain a degree of skepticism about all our beliefs related to and associated with our theoretical investigations.

What about our most essential beliefs; perhaps, beliefs we are fully committed to? If they are part of the inquiry process, then we should also treat these as hypotheses of on-going experiments. One excellent example of this attitude is Gandhi’s approach towards his non-violence theory for social justice. In the first three paragraphs of his autobiography he uses the word “experiment” eight times. He refers to his nonviolent direct action theory (one that he was fully committed to and devoted his entire life to) as an experiment. He begins his autobiography as follows:

It is not my purpose to attempt a real autobiography. I simply want to tell the story of my numerous experiments with truth, and as my life consists of
nothing but those experiments, it is true that my life will take the shape of an autobiography. But I should not mind, if every page of it speaks only of my experiments.iii

Here Gandhi demonstrates a respect for truth insofar as he begins with a certain degree intellectual humility. By alluding to his views and actions as experiments, he recognizes that his beliefs, even though he believes them wholeheartedly and without reservation, could be false.

I have found this powerful logical instrument of thinking, this fallibilistic attitude, in other surprising places such as in Thich Nhat Hanh’s Peace is Every Step. In the section “Love is Action”, Hanh expresses a strong commitment to Peirce’s doctrine: “Do not Block the Road of Inquiry.” The first three of his fourteen essential principles, for a life of love and mindfulness in our contemporary world, are meant to make sure that the road of inquiry remains unobstructed, even by education.

They are as follows:

1. Do not be idolatrous about or bound to any doctrine, theory, or ideology. All systems of thought are guiding means; they are not absolute truth. 2. Do not think that the knowledge you presently possess is changeless, absolute truth. Avoid being narrow-minded and bound to present views. Learn and practice non-attachment from views in order to receive other’s viewpoints. 3. Do not force others, including children, by any means whatsoever, to adopt your views, whether by authority, threat, money, propaganda, or even education. However, through compassionate dialogue, help others renounce fanaticism and narrowness.iv

Liberal learning at Moravian College can be enhanced by adopting Gandhi’s experimental attitude and Thich Nhat Hanh’s three principles of open mindedness as part of the inquiry process we share with colleagues and students. Our students can witness our fallibilistic commitments throughout our method of inquiry; they can learn from witnessing our doing thinking and reflection; they can learn to
respect truth by being a part of our careful, rigorous, and open minded forms of inquiry, and, as Thich Nhat Hanh suggest, by our “practice of non-attachment from views and our unwillingness to be bound to doctrines, theories or ideologies.”

Socrates also is an exemplary figure of this method; his extraordinary wisdom can be characterized in his knowledge about his lack of knowledge, and hence in his unwillingness to ever concede that he, or anyone else, had reached absolute truth.

Can we enhance liberal learning by participating with our students in an educational experience that never blocks the road of inquiry? Maybe we can enhance our liberal teaching through our liberal learning.

**Endnotes**

Liberal Arts Education and Interprofessional Collaborative Innovations

Janice Farber

According to the *Association of the American Colleges and Universities*, liberal education is an approach to learning that encourages individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society), as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest” (aacu.org). Today, a liberal education usually includes a general education curriculum that provides broad learning in multiple disciplines and ways of knowing, along with more in-depth study in a major. The broad goals of liberal education have changed over the years, and require institutions to adapt to 21st century needs of faculty and students. The LinC curriculum provides this foundational basis for students at Moravian college, but assessment and restructuring may provide a clearer focus that aligns with the college’s new mission statement.

In recent years, the nursing profession has embraced the intellectual and professional development of nurses as essential components across the entire educational continuum for entrance into the nursing profession. The qualifications and level of education required for entry into the nursing profession have been widely debated by nurses, nursing organizations, and academics for more than 40 years. These include various educational backgrounds ranging from diploma, associate degree, or baccalaureate degree in nursing. The *American Association of Colleges of Nursing* (AACN) recognizes the Bachelor of Science degree in nursing as the minimum educational requirement for professional nursing practice. Although a
BSN education is not the answer for all that is expected of nurses in the future, it does, relative to other educational pathways, introduce students to the liberal learning and global perspective gained from a four-year baccalaureate education (aacn.org).

Today’s students need to learn the skills to adapt to a changing workplace, which includes profession-specific knowledge and skills, as well as a broader range to include a sense of social responsibility, as well as intellectual and practical skills that include communication, analytical, and problem-solving skills (aacu.org). The LinC curriculum may be revised to better promote the liberal arts by setting the standard for quality and creativity among disciplines, and to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings in experiential experiences. Unfortunately, there is sometimes difficulty establishing relationships with collaborative community practices and settings. Instruction is further complicated by a lack of interaction amongst different disciplines (Selle, Salamon, Boarman, & Sauer, 2008).

New approaches and educational models may be utilized to promote professional and academic experiential learning opportunities. Interprofessional collaboration is a new teaching-learning strategy used in healthcare professions, which may be utilized in liberal arts institutions. Initial attempts at interdisciplinary education by simply combining students into groups without adequate curriculum adaptation, preparation, and planning have been ineffective. Applying the liberal arts interdisciplinary model, developed by William Newell, a transdisciplinary faculty team in the College of Health Professions of the University of New England identified the course content, design, and instructional processes necessary to create an
interdisciplinary elective course. The eight-step model and how it was applied to the development of an ethics course for seven different health care professional disciplines is presented. The result of this applied design approach was a course that assisted the transition of health care professional students previously accustomed to studying and working within their own discipline to communicate, cooperate, and collaborate across discipline-specific lines. It is possible that departments could create collaborative relationships to embrace and revitalize the LinC curriculum. This form of interdisciplinary course collaboration may enhance the spirit of the liberal arts, as well as promote professional and academic experiences and collaborative experiential learning experiences that meet the college’s new mission statement regarding pillar one.

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What do we mean by liberal arts? When Robert Maynard Hutchins wrote his classical defense of the liberal arts in 1939, he clearly had in mind the Western Civilization. The same year Hutchison published his text, Adolf Hitler started his apocalyptic war to end the Western Civilization. Hutchins's program, the defense of the Western Civilization, was more urgent than ever. I think our time has the challenge to defend and carry over not only the Western but all civilizations. That is liberal arts education. It has to be global and it has to carry over the heritage of the global civilizations to the next generation.

But how to do that? I want to propose that a liberal arts curriculum should be grounded as a connection.

What do I mean by liberal arts as a connection? Connections are different from values. Values refer to something immaterial, something that is important, something that we share as an idea. Values are ideas. Connections refer to actions, something material and tangible, something we establish and can establish. Most of us adhere to liberal arts as a value. But how many of us adhere to liberal arts as a connection? What do I mean by this question?

An example of liberal arts as a value is our LinC program. Each one of its components (Ms, Us, and Fs) carries a value. My HIST 112 carries an M1-value that is described in the LinC rubric for M1:
Learning in Common courses in Historical Studies should deal with a significantly large period in the history of Europe and/or the Americas that is dominated by European or European-derived values. In addition, students should be able to evaluate various approaches to the study of history and learn to scrutinize a range of primary sources.

Although the M1 category focuses on Europe and the Americas, history as a discipline evaluates all human experience and change over time. It seeks to provide a contemporary understanding of the past by assessing a historical period on its own terms. Historical methods are interdisciplinary in nature. Students will learn how to integrate political, economic, social, and cultural perspectives in order to build up a holistic picture of the past.

What is typical for M1 and all other categories in the LinC is their autonomy. Each of the courses is self-contained. They are connected to each other only through an idea, a value, of a macro-structure that we call LinC.

The value-based definition of liberal arts is quite different from connection-based liberal arts. Let’s take my HIST 112 and see how it could serve liberal arts education as a connection, as an action. It is a course that surveys the history of Europe from 1500 to 1991. It is pure content and since the content is difficult, the students have to develop their reading skills. But we know that neither content nor skills make liberal arts. One can learn content and skills anywhere. One does not need a HIST
112 to teach students reading skills. One can also learn the history of Europe from 1500 to 1991 by simply memorizing all the facts. And this is obviously not what we mean by liberal arts. So what is liberal arts as a connection?

I argue that my HIST 112 becomes part of liberal arts only as far as it is connected to other courses. It is not enough to connect HIST 112 to other courses through an idea, a value. It must be connected to other courses through action. How could we connect courses to each other? I think that there are several, perhaps unlimited ways of doing this. But here are some:

I. Learning Communities. By creating so-called course clusters students could be challenged to find and articulate connections between different courses they take as a group. This could be combined by living arrangements by creating Living Learning Communities. The articulation of connections could be a separate course or an assignment.

II. Intentional Double Majors (or a Major and a Minor or Major and two Minors). By asking students to pursue at least one other field than their own and then articulate in an elaborate and original manner how these fields are interconnected to make sense of the world and constitute a whole and meaningful learning. The articulation could be a separate course, a capstone seminar.

It is in these intersectionalities and links that the liberal arts as a connection reside:
Why is the link to other courses so important? Because links disrupt the silos of our disciplines. In liberal arts this disruption should not be random and distractive. It should be systemic, a way of establishing connections between the ways of understanding the world.

Why is the link to other courses so important? Because these links disrupt the silos of our disciplines. In liberal arts this disruption should not be random and distractive. It should be a practice.
Experience, Activism, and the Liberal Arts
By Bob Mayer

Last month we were graced with the presence of Reverend James Lawson. Recall that Rev. Lawson is Dr. King and America’s great teacher of nonviolence. His work in teaching nonviolence can inform our thinking about the liberal arts and why and how we might teach them. In 1959, Rev. Lawson gathered a group of students in a church basement and explored ways to nonviolently fight segregation and a generally oppressive environment in Nashville, Tennessee. Before learning the strategic elements of nonviolence, the students studied many subjects: the great religions of the world, the Bible, the philosophy of Gandhi and Henry David Thoreau, the history of nonviolence in the U.S., the recent Montgomery Bus Boycott and more. Rev. Lawson wanted the students to understand the philosophy of nonviolence so that after they acted, they could come back and better analyze what they had done. This approach models what I hope informs a Moravian approach to studying the liberal arts: students study deeply in various liberal arts to better analyze any experiential forms of learning in which they engage and also to reflect on their own life path. Students need to use their study of the liberal arts to look beyond the notion of job and to think more broadly about what they see as their important life’s work, the critical role they might play in the world.

Rev. Lawson’s approach and Moravian’s push to connect classroom learning with experiential forms of learning feels very familiar to me. That connection captures how I think about teacher education. Teachers need to think deeply in many ways before they step into their classrooms and they need a cognitive propensity and actual strategies for reflection. After the students in Nashville sat in, they came back
and collectively analyzed what had happened in order to plan for the future. For their own post-field reflection, teachers need something akin to those post-sit-in analysis sessions.

I will say little about the reflective strategies we encourage our students to employ after their time in the field. That reflection occurs through journaling, through discussion at seminars, through in-depth supervision and much more. These reflective strategies are the hallmark of Moravian’s teacher education program. Rather, I want to talk in this brief paper about how a study of the liberal arts not only informs, but also is essential for the reflective nature of the teacher education program. I also want to say something directly about what this means for the LinC curriculum, but I will save that for last.

First of all, the disciplines that make up the liberal arts form the bedrock of a liberal arts education. I am uncomfortable when we start with a series of skills (critical thinking, effective expression of ideas through speech) and call that the liberal arts we seek. When I say liberal arts, I think of the humanities, sciences, and the arts. I am somewhat under the sway of Robert Hutchins and a great books education. So for instance, when I study guitar I learn about rhythm within the context of a song or piece. I see how the rhythm and melody helps to convey an idea. I translate that to my writing where I see the rhythm of words and sentences and how that rhythm might lead a reader through an idea. I could go on about the importance of music in studying the civil rights movement or any period of history, music as expressions of emotions and arguments that are the fabric of moments and movements in history. I note that many civil rights songs were first church music establishing that interconnectedness between the church and the movement. So I take my study of music and use it to help me better understand other activities in which I engage. I will leave it to the members of our music and art departments to fill in the gaping holes I have left in my arguing for the role of the arts in Moravian’s liberal arts education.

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19 Music is a central part of my life and I view it as a very important part of this conversation. So for instance, when I study guitar I learn about rhythm within the context of a song or piece. I see how the rhythm and melody helps to convey an idea. I translate that to my writing where I see the rhythm of words and sentences and how that rhythm might lead a reader through an idea. I could go on about the importance of music in studying the civil rights movement or any period of history, music as expressions of emotions and arguments that are the fabric of moments and movements in history. I note that many civil rights songs were first church music establishing that interconnectedness between the church and the movement. So I take my study of music and use it to help me better understand other activities in which I engage. I will leave it to the members of our music and art departments to fill in the gaping holes I have left in my arguing for the role of the arts in Moravian’s liberal arts education.
model of the liberal arts so when I read, I seek knowledge and maybe even a little wisdom. In saying this, I want to be clear that I run from that limited canon of white dead male Europeans and celebrate opportunities to read and seek wisdom widely in arts and sciences, reading Buddhist sutras, the writing of W.E.B. DuBois, the essays of Margaret Fuller and much more. Students need to understand various disciplines in order to engage with the world. Beyond those truths offered, the disciplines give us approaches for finding the truth. Studying how different disciplines find the truth gives our students multiple lenses for seeing the world. I see these multiple lenses anthropologically as different cultural lenses for seeing the world. Growing from these lenses are distinct ways of thinking. I think of history as a discipline and consider that historians must think with an empathy in order to gather people from the past. They construct and perhaps achieve this empathy through a reading of documents, a study of artifacts, quantification of objects or people, and more. They have clear methods for analyzing this data that allows for the possibility of historical empathy. In terms of a study of religion, I observed how Rev. Lawson often drew his conclusions about problems in the world and nonviolent solutions to those problems from his study of Bible and theology. I only have some sense of the thinking that took him from that theology to the issues of the current world. Coming back to teachers, our teacher ed students need to understand the knowledge imbedded in disciplines as well as the methods for finding that knowledge and needed cognitive propensities in order to move beyond the teaching of mere facts or skills. Future teachers need to teach their students how knowledge
is established and how to create their own knowledge. Studying the liberal arts helps us learn how to do this.

Secondly, teachers need to have important reasons for their work. Teachers need to see their work as more than a job or more than a good situation (9 months of work and “summers off”). I want a study of the liberal arts to inform the vision that drives the future teachers in our program. And ethics should be a big part of that vision. Our students will frequently say that they want to teach because they care about kids and they want to make a difference in their lives. As the educational philosopher Nel Noddings argues, future teachers need to explore deeply what it means to care about other human beings. That caring says something about how we regard others and how we behave towards others. In addition, if we care about children and truly want to make a difference in their lives, we need to understand the community they come from and the broader national and international context in which their schooling takes place. Some, hopefully few, teachers say: it is difficult or impossible for me to teach this child because their home life is so impoverished and their parents do not teach proper values. This view of children is troubling and suggests where a deep understanding of caring is needed and a rich knowledge of the child’s world is essential. I look for the liberal arts and here I would say directly the LinC curriculum to help our future teachers to gain that understanding of both caring and an understanding of their student’s world. And the liberal arts have much more to offer in helping our students shape their personal teaching vision.

Finally, I conclude with a bit of a cliché, so no crescendo in this piece. Teachers must have a love of learning and we can gain that love of learning from a study of
the liberal arts. I want teachers who read widely, who are artists, who study the environment so they can say to their students I walk the walk. I want teachers to embody and model that love for their students. I look for you, my colleagues on the faculty, to fill in the holes of these clichés, you whose friend possibly say, “Oh yeah, you study and read a lot, but of course you would do that, you are a professor.” It sometimes feels in our culture that learning is viewed as a cloistered activity in which only a few old monks and nuns engage. I want the study that all of our students do to deepen a passion for learning. The students in Nashville were students of deep ideas and they were activists. I want that model of books and experience to shape and drive the activism of all of our students.

Connected with that love of learning, I want our future teachers to be curious and to look critically at the world. I need to recognize that I intend our students to be activists in the spirit of the students in Nashville. As teachers, they walk into a broken system (testing, charter schools, accountability movements built on the assumption that teachers really don’t care). To fix the system, they need to be able to look critically at the system. They must have a propensity to ask questions about the system, their students, their student’s world, themselves. I return to Rev. Lawson. In his time with us, he conveyed how nonviolence, the philosophy growing from Gandhi, from Jesus, and from his own deep reflection on experience, allowed a frame for critically analyzing the world. Teachers need such a frame that is grounded in something as profound as nonviolence and they need to use that frame to constantly critique their work and the world surrounding that work.
I speak of teacher education and how I conceive of that enterprise. I mean for that conception as a model for the rest of the college as we move toward a curriculum connecting experience with more academic pursuits.

I conclude with a list of thoughts about the role of LinC in promoting my vision. I intend these thoughts to provoke reflection and conversation about the role of the LinC curriculum in embedding the liberal arts throughout the years our students are with us:

1) Hiring of liberal arts faculty to sustain and increase current numbers is essential.

2) General education grounded in study in the liberal arts is the bedrock of a Moravian student’s education.

3) Faculty teaching in programs that are more professionally oriented must have a deep understanding of the liberal arts side of our student’s education. We must consciously make connections between the liberal arts and the professional program.

4) The pieces of our program must be consciously linked (LinCed), from first year seminar, to the rest of LinC, to the major and/or professional program, to capstone experiences in the major or program, to all experiences (study abroad, internships, coop programs).

5) Final assessments (assessment questions students must answer by the end of an internship) and other assessments, especially in experiential forms of learning, need to help students consciously explore connections between the liberal arts and the experience.
Imperative Infrastructure Inclusion for Intensive and Integrative Instruction
James West, Ph.D., Economics and Business Department, Moravian College - 5/19/2015

Curriculum
The whole of the problem, in part
Is that part of the parts are not whole
So wholly I part from my part of the whole
   Where devotion to part
   Has diminished the whole
   To less than the whole of its parts.
   -- Jim West

The liberal arts college proudly exhibits to prospective students the rich integrative possibilities of the smaller, residential academic experience. Here faculty student ratios are low and faculty and students converse and cooperate across disciplinary lines with frequency. Creative course development, which blends philosophy, history, science and economics, among other combinations, are encouraged. Critical thinking, global and ethical perspectives, and inclusion of diverse views are among the goals embedded in the intensive and integrative curriculum.

While intensive studies in a specialty area, along with the integration of diverse fields of knowledge, are wonderful achievements, too often curricular aspirations are constrained by the lack of foundation knowledge. Required survey courses can be viewed as building the ‘infrastructure’ of the curriculum, without which intensive and integration studies will necessarily face slow and heavy traffic. This paper argues for increased attention to building college-wide curriculum infrastructure, especially in the social sciences.
We are all aware of the remedial math and writing skills required for many of our incoming students. Required writing instruction begins with the freshman seminar and culminates with the Writing Intensive Course. Better students go beyond with SOAR, Honors, etc., but the infrastructure building courses in the early years are required for all. This is true also for basic math literacy. It is through these early required courses that the writing and math skills, essential for the success in intensive and integrative courses, are developed.

While the question of building infrastructure cuts across disciplines, given my field of specialization, I will focus on how best we can provide this infrastructure in the social sciences. A recent study, (2014 National Assessment of Educational Progress), indicates that over two thirds of middle and secondary school students tested below minimum standards in history, civics and geography. From my anecdotal experience, college students often fare no better in these subjects. If we throw economics into the mix, it is clear that many students lack the fundamental knowledge to be informed citizens, a desirable outcome of a liberal arts education.

The list of things a college student should know in the social sciences (including history) is debatable. In my opinion, students should have a basic geographic knowledge of the planet including all regions and countries; an introduction to world history, the history of the United States; basic history and tenets of the world’s religions; the workings of American governance, and the fundamentals of the micro and macro economy. More may be desirable, but in practice our
curricular constraints and individual preferences limit the creation of this infrastructure.

One significant constraint is the unit system which reduces the number of subjects a student can take in four years. An unfortunate consequence of this constraint became apparent in a recent decision at Moravian College to have students select some, but not necessarily all, of the common liberal arts areas. This allows the prospect, (and perhaps it has already happened), that a student could graduate with a liberal arts degree from Moravian College without a single course in History. In my opinion, that is too much flexibility given our mission as a college.

Beyond the constraints of curricular structure there are preferential constraints. Professors love to delve into the deep waters of their academic disciplines, while few relish the shallow water of the repetitive survey courses. Many of the current courses that fill the liberal arts requirements are refreshingly deep, but not that wide. They fulfill the requirement but leave large gaps in essential background knowledge of a field.

Broad, fact filled, and required survey courses, introduced to freshmen, is where the infrastructure of the social sciences can be generated. Such survey courses in higher education, like memorization in grade school, often get a bad rap, but after years of neglect, they may suddenly be back in fashion.
My question for the audience is therefore, 'should the liberal education guidelines be more structured requiring that all students acquire a comprehensive knowledge of geography, history and political economics, in order to prepare them more fully as graduates and citizens. Like having the requisite writing or math background, a strong social science infrastructure will make the upper level (intensive and integrating courses) even better.

While depth and diversity of course work are laudable and essential, the knowledge deficit of incoming students indicates that for a solid educational process to be built, the infrastructure must come first.
Endnotes


