**Moderator and Speaker:**
Michael R. Halleran, Provost

**Opening Remarks**

Dr. Halleran opened the conversation by welcoming the audience. This is the seventh meeting/discussion focusing on William & Mary as a leading liberal arts university in the 21st century. Dr. Halleran explained that he wanted this session to be a conversation based on previous meetings and the recent white paper. There was a brief recap of the sessions thus far. He then went on to highlight the materials that were available on the Provost’s website. Dr. Halleran went on to describe the three objectives of this ongoing process:

- To determine what we are as an institution
- To determine our challenges and advantages as an institution
- To create a guide, not a prescription, for the curriculum and merit reviews

He explained that we began with the phrase “liberal arts university”. This is not a bad way of describing us (William and Mary): the institution is a hybrid. We have an intense focus on the liberal arts and undergraduate education. In 1963 we introduced a PhD and ceased to be a college. We don’t look like a research university in size and in programs, such as engineering and medicine. Is there a public university like us? Not really. Are there privates that look like us? Yes, several, including Wake Forest. We have a unique blend of expertise, teaching, and research that is focused on undergraduates and selected professional and graduate programs, and we happen to be public. In describing the uniqueness of William and Mary Dr. Halleran referenced a quote from admissions materials that said “There is only one William and Mary, and now it’s yours”.

Dr. Halleran went on to speak about the etymology of the word “university” and the focus on “one”. It does not mean that we are all going to be the same thing, but for our students and faculty it means that we need to take advantage of our five schools. We need to keep our current strengths, while remaining distinctive. We have a high quality faculty and an intimate setting.

In closing, Dr. Halleran wanted to remind everyone that we live in a world with constraints, and money is a variable that affects how we chart our course. He referenced a current article in *Newsweek* about the economy and liberal arts and another past article by *Newsweek* editor John Meacham. Although there may be critics of a liberal arts education now, short term need should not replace long term thinking. There will only be more need for students who can handle global issues in the future.
Audience Questions and Comments

• Bob Archibald from the economics department wanted to talk about an item that was missing from the white paper: the economic advantages of distant education vs. face-to-face education. He suggested that we should explicitly address our focus on face-to-face instruction.
  • Dr. Halleran commented that his perception was that distant education was more focused on niche markets in the student population. More elite institutions will not “teach” this way in regards to technology, but use technology to accentuate the student learning experience.
• Bill Cooke from the physics department commented on the use of electronics lab, in regards to an earlier comment by Dr. Halleran. He referenced the book *Shopcraft as Soulcraft: An inquiry into the Value of Work* in emphasizing the importance of students working “hands on” in solving real-time problems.
  • Dr. Halleran commented that there was a variety of ways of how we were trying to incorporate learning and research opportunities, especially in groups. More and more fields are finding that better results are achieved on projects when those, inside and outside their field, are included.
• Sarah Stafford from the economics department talked about another missing aspect in the white paper: that there is a value in not having a significant number of courses taught by graduate students and adjunct faculty. She went on to say that students do not understand the difference between the types of instructors they have and that we should think about policy and frameworks for how to address non-tenure track faculty in the future.
  • Dr. Halleran said this was not an intentional omission. He talked about how there are ongoing discussions within the faculty senate about how faculty should be arranged in regards to instruction. He discussed the “five year” rule in regards to instruction. He also posed the questions: where is the introduction of the discipline and should tenure track faculty be teaching it? Should faculty be teaching the skill based courses needed to reach the introductory level? He went on to say about 1/3 of instruction at W&M is provided by non-tenured/tenure-eligible faculty. He explained that at University of Miami, for example and many universities, that the introduction course in English is mostly taught by TA’s and adjuncts, whereas other course in other disciplines were taught by tenure track faculty due to the nature of the material.
• Bill Cooke from the physics department addressed a section of the white paper that discussed admission metrics and asked if those measured are what really affected student success. Should more weight be given to students who come in better prepared, i.e. have they had prior research experience in secondary school? He asked if there was a way faculty could be more coupled with the admissions process. He went on to say that William and Mary should have a unique admissions policy that takes other academic measures into account, in such ways that service and other variables are currently.
  • Dr. Halleran said that he did not mean in that section to look at those standard measures as opposed to others. These measures are more meaningful at the
cohort level, as opposed to the scholarly merit of the individual student. He went on to say that he had thought it interesting that he has not heard anyone in the conversations suggest anything about improving the quality of the current students He fundamentally agreed with Cooke’s views. Variables, such as the SAT, are important in part because other people look at it. Take St. John’s: there is a great deal of pre-selection going on in order to get a particular student. Dr. Halleran said he would not want to initiate a review of the admissions practices next year but that it was something to consider in the longer term.

• Sarah Stafford from the economics department asked a clarifying question: do we not have the right mix of students? What are we exactly looking for as an institution?
  - Bill Cooke replied that there are clearly other factors being introduced and considered, but faculty have not have adequate input.
  - Dr. Halleran said that it is a question of what kind of questions and weights we use in making decisions. Today, there are “nods” to athletics. If we had a BFA program, there would be ways to bring in very talented young people in that “bring down the house”.

• David Kranbuehl of the chemistry department appreciated the document. He commented on the research and active learning. He takes pride in the style of education and the global focus of coursework and research that the institution offers. He would suggest using the term “engaged” learning as opposed to the focus on “research” on page 13 of the white paper. “Engaged” suggests that we will expose students to the real world and the things that they will have to deal with when they leave. He suggested that, from a chemistry perspective, they could assess engaged learning from the beginning of a student’s life with the department.
  - Dr Halleran replied that his point in this section of the document was that we already do this, but do we want to take that to the next level? This would mean that students would understand that it is fundamental to their education. But as an “add on” it is really difficult.
  - Pamela Eddy of the School of Education, EPPL program, responded to agree with Kranbuehl and commented on the importance on having such a focus. She then asked if this is our “flag in the sand”, how do we rally behind it.
    - Dr. Halleran said that we know that is the concept (engaged learning) that we want to focus on, but we don’t always agree on what to call it. Others will figure out the term for that. He stated there is something nice about the term public ivy, except dwindling state support. He explained that here were questions at a recent gathering go alumni about why the College does not go private.

• Teresa Longo from the modern languages department and Dean of Educational Policy wanted to discuss the section about the liberal arts in the modern age. She thinks that we have determined, in small pockets of the College, the nuances of interdisciplinary cooperation.
  - Dr. Halleran replied that the College is at the point it is now, in regards to collaboration, due to faculty initiative. He explained that his challenge and a
challenge to the Deans are to find ways to make interdisciplinary cooperation easier. There are things we do not control, like state support. But even without large amounts of money we can find other ways to carry out these projects.

- Teresa Longo asked if curriculum review one of those other ways.
- Dr. Halleran responded than in order to develop breadth it’s definitely a way to do it. There are many who are interested, there are others who are not interested at all. He then discussed the interdisciplinary conversations of the 1980’s. He explained that we want to make it easy and on an equal footing for everyone, in that it would not result in course overload and other issues.

- Bill Cooke from physics commented that removing the internal barriers is one thing, but there is also something to say about disciplines that have market forces that determine their pay scales, such as English and chemistry for example.

- Dr. Halleran replied that the average salary in the School of Law is obviously more than in Arts & Sciences, but that is what the market demands. Even teaching loads, most of arts and sciences has a 2/2 load and law has a 2/1 load. He went on to say that the solutions to these difficulties were not rocket science, that we should be able to solve these problems. Disciplinary structures are arbitrary, but not irrational; there will be growth in disciplines like American Studies and applied sciences due to their interdisciplinary nature.

- Nancy Gofus, an alumna and member of the foundation board asked why there was no mention of a formal leadership program, which raises an interesting question: is there a place, rooted in the history of the college, for teaching leadership. She went on to reference leadership programs in professional schools.

- Dr. Halleran replied that his was something that was deliberately left out. He referenced the Jepson School of Leadership at the University of Richmond. He emphasized leadership through having a high ability and confidence in one’s field. But added that, perhaps, there could be peripheral programs that could address leadership in a unique way.

- Dr. Halleran added an additional comment. He said that the single hardest thing as we move forward was that we cannot do everything we do today, plus add the things we would like to do. We could not sustain such efforts long term. One of the biggest stumbling blocks is that we have things that we have to do. The more rigidly we define those things, the harder it is to add and develop new initiatives. It would mean that something is not getting done somewhere else. Some things are going to have to be modified.

He gave an example from another chemistry department about incorporating writing. This professor did not add another paper, but incorporated writing throughout the course. Although he lost 10% of the course content by doing so, students learned significantly more.

With no more comments or questions from the audience Dr, Halleran thanked everyone for attending.

Discussion notes compiled and written by L. Neal Holly