

Student Learning Committee (SLC)
Minutes from Meeting on January 23, 2012

Committee members present: Kendrick Brown (Chair), Nancy Bostrom, Cheryl Browne, Adrienne Christiansen, , Lisa Landreman, Peter Mathison , Kimerly Miller, Libby Shoop, Yang Yu.

Absent: Terri Fishel , Jim Hoppe, Harry Waters, Jr.

I. Work for this semester

SLC will review and discuss the remainder of the goals, beginning with Goal E. After the committee has revised each of the goals, SLC will turn its attention to the beginning of the document, and will discuss remaining questions highlighted as either “Decisions” or “Issues.”

II. Review feedback and suggestions for the initial draft

SLC discussed revisions to the introductory paragraphs for Goal E: Take Responsibility for Intellectual, Personal and Social Choices. Discussion highlights are included here, but for specific edits, see the revised draft.

- What do we mean by “social” choices? This comes from the Statement of Purpose and Belief (SOPB), but is open to interpretation. Would it be better to simply say “Take Responsibility for Choices”? Or should the text remain as is, with a description of the terms in the introductory paragraphs?
- Possible options for defining “social” choices:
 - Choices that impact others
 - Choices made “in the community”
- “Taking responsibility” emphasizes what happens after the fact—after the decision has already been made, but the learning outcomes emphasize the process leading up to the decision.
- Should Goal E emphasize the decision-making process, living with the consequences, or both?
 - Does the document already address the ability to “make informed choices”?
 - SLC revisited this particular section of the SOPB, emphasis added:

*...Finally, students should be prepared to **take responsibility** for their personal, social, and intellectual choices. We believe that the benefit of the educational experience at Macalester is the development of individuals who **make informed judgments** and interpretations of the broader world around them and **choose actions or beliefs for which they are willing to be held accountable....***

- Making informed decisions may be addressed in other areas of the document, but in this specific case, we may be getting at something different—the process of discernment and an appreciation of standards. In academic departments, for example, there are standards; the community has standards. The SOPB appears to call for a broader interpretation than taking responsibility only, and this type of discernment, relative to the standards, is not necessarily encompassed in other parts of the document.
- How, if at all, does a situation like the Winter Ball fit into intellectual, personal or social choices?
- The SOPB emphasizes the desire for students to “make informed judgments.” Informed judgments may be reinforced by a student’s willingness to be held accountable.
- SLC should consider changing the order of the introductory paragraphs, so that the grounding language comes first, followed by a description of how the goals relates to the mission.

Action Item: Kendrick will revise the draft and circulate to SLC before our next meeting. Track changes will be used to identify points for further discussion. Before next week’s discussion, please review Goal E.