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To: vpaa@tin.truman.edu

From: VPAA <vpaa@truman.edu>

Subject: Garry Gordon's Important Announcement

THIS LETTER IS BEING SENT TO ALL FACULTY VIA EMAIL TO SPEED
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May 3, 2000

Dear Colleague:

I know this is an extraordinarily busy time to communicate with you this late in the semester, but I need to inform you of steps we are taking to strengthen and enhance our Liberal Studies Program (LSP) and its full implementation. As I hope you have heard by now from your Faculty Senate representative, I have proposed the creation of a part time faculty appointment to serve as Director of Interdisciplinary Studies. I had originally thought to make this known next year, but current conditions exist that have caused me to move forward even at this late point in the academic year. I am communicating with you today to inform you about this new position and to solicit applications for it.

As I hope you know, we are still unable to offer enough seats/courses to meet student requirements for some key areas in the LSP—in particular, those areas which are “shared” among all divisions and faculty. Specifically, these areas of concern are the Junior Interdisciplinary Seminars, Writing Enhanced Courses, Communicative Mode of Inquiry Courses, and the Intercultural Interconnecting Perspective requirement. We should be mindful, though, that we have made great progress in implementing our new LSP, and we should all be encouraged by what we have accomplished. We are very close to having adequate seats available in the Communicative Mode and are making progress in all the other areas. I have been excited by what I have seen in the work of our faculty to build from the ground up a significant offering of interdisciplinary seminars, perhaps the most important new element of the curriculum. The kind of scholarship that has

gone into the creation of these courses has been consistent with the high quality of our faculty. Still, we have more work to do in order to have a fully implemented LSP.

I have been meeting with faculty leaders to discuss these issues. In addition to my proposal to establish a position for the purpose of coordinating LSP courses outside our divisional boundaries, we will be presenting a plan to the Undergraduate Council and Faculty Senate to make the approval process for new LSP courses more effective. It is also important that we make the process more encouraging for those who might want to propose courses. I hope you will be in contact with your Undergraduate Council and Faculty Senate representatives about these ideas. I will not outline the details of this plan here, but you should have a copy of the plan before you soon from your division representatives. Please talk with them about this plan.

The Director of Interdisciplinary Studies position is more fully described in the accompanying job description. This part time position will allow for faculty to teach only one class per semester and will be renewable on a yearly basis for up to three years. I am setting up a screening committee to help me identify good candidates for this position. Details of the position and the application process are included with this message. Talk with your division head if you are interested. We need good faculty leadership in this important position, especially at this critical time.

Thank you again for supporting the liberal arts at Truman, and specifically for what you have done, and continue to do, to create a strong liberal studies curriculum for our students.

Sincerely,

Garry L. Gordon

POSITION DESCRIPTION: DIRECTOR OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

The Director of Interdisciplinary Studies (Director) will:

- Report directly to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA).
Actual office hours and location will be determined in coordination with

the VPAA and the division head of the Director. The Office of the Vice President will provide support for the Director.

- Be hired on a 10-month annual contract beginning August 1. The contract will be renewable for up to three years.
- Be in charge of the continuing implementation of the Liberal Studies Program (LSP), particularly in the areas of Junior Interdisciplinary Seminars (JINS), Writing Enhanced Courses, Communicative Mode of Inquiry Courses, and the Intercultural Interconnecting Perspective requirement.
- Organize the JINS Fairs and oversee enrollment in JINS courses.
- Oversee the JINS and other LSP curricular grants and monitor their progress.
- Work with the division heads to ensure efficient scheduling of JINS offerings to avoid for example the concentrating of JINS courses at the same times.
- Identify, recruit and meet with a group of “consultants” from the faculty concerning LSP issues. Consultants will be selected from faculty who have served on the appropriate LSP committees, developed JINS or other interdisciplinary courses, or shown a steady interest in developing interdisciplinary studies.
- Compile, publish and distribute information about the “consultants” to all University faculty at the beginning of each academic year.
- Meet with the “consultants” as a group to refine guidelines and gather information on the current state of the LSP.
- Attend division meetings to address LSP areas to include a meeting in each division during the fall semester to describe the LSP outcomes and to encourage submission of appropriate courses by faculty.
- Serve as a liaison with Faculty Development to encourage the continuing development of interdisciplinary offerings and have a role in orienting new faculty to the expectations of the LSP.
- Assist in the education of faculty, staff and students concerning the LSP.
- Work with the Registrar on interdisciplinary requirements and address questions affecting students' progress through the degree.

- Review catalog course descriptions and Discipline Action Plans to identify existing courses that might serve the LSP and to facilitate discipline objectives with regard to the LSP.
- Coordinate the efforts of the “consultants”, interested faculty, and governing bodies to promote the continued growth of interdisciplinary, intercultural and writing enhanced curriculum.
- Perform other related duties as determined by the VPAA.

Director of Interdisciplinary Studies Application Process

Eligibility:

All full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to apply for this position.

Application Process:

Discuss with your division head your applying for the position of Director of Interdisciplinary Studies (Director), the feasibility of a replacement, and the division head's support of your application.

Submit a letter of application through your division head to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Your letter should state how you would be an effective Director. Include examples of any prior administrative or similar experiences (e.g., convenor, committee chair), discuss your ability to work with others and your participation in or experience with the LSP (and/or the liberal arts) and any ideas you have for the position or for improving the implementation of the LSP.

Attach to the letter a curriculum vita and any other information you choose to support your application (e.g., LSP and interdisciplinary course proposals, course syllabi, grant and research reports, etc.).

Obtain your division head's written endorsement including how the division would accommodate your absence if you are selected.

Deadline:

The review of applications will begin May 11, 2000, and will continue until the position is filled. Our goal is for the Director to begin work on August 1, 2000.

NOTE: Please contact the Vice President for Academic Affairs Office, x4107, if you have any questions concerning this position or the application process.