CEPC Response to Year One Report: Geography Program

February 19, 2015

Members of the Curriculum and Education Policy Committee thank Dr. Bockenhauer for the informative Year One Report. We found the background information about Geography as a discipline and discussion of the development of spatial thinking very helpful. As requested in the CEPC guidelines for a first year report, the Geography report included information about the mission of the program and reported on progress towards strategic goals based on previous feedback from the CEPC.

Although the mission of the program is woven into comments in the first paragraph, the committee requests that the mission statement be stated more clearly. It would be helpful if the mission statement was described as complementing, but distinct from the mission of the College as a whole.

Secondly, committee members suggested writing a clear, articulate vision statement. A mission statement defines the present state of the Geography program and explains what the program does, who it does it for, and how it accomplishes this. A vision statement, on the other hand, should describe what the Geography program plans to achieve over time and include long term achievable goals. There is some mention of possibly making Geography a minor or adding faculty with interdisciplinary appointments. Perhaps these aspirations could be incorporated or related to the vision statement.

An idea suggested during the meeting was to develop a Geography concentration to be part of the Broadfield Social Studies Certification Program. If interested, the committee recommends that you explore this option with Bob Osgood, Chair of Education.

In summary, as you prepare your Year Two Report we encourage you to:
- Clearly articulate/outline the mission and vision statement of a Geography program at St. Norbert College.
- Make a strong convincing case for adding a Geography minor to the curriculum (if this is to be part of the vision statement).
- Consider collaborating with Education to develop a Geography concentration for education students.