

FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

December 14, 2017

**Five College Office, 97 Spring St., Amherst, MA
(First draft distributed on Feb. 4, 2018)**

Council Members Present: Mike Brooks (President), Ellen Kosmer (Vice President-Elect), Gordon Wyse (Past President), Kathy Campbell (Treasurer), Cynthia Barker (Secretary), Joanne Creighton, Pam Daniels, Jake Greenburg, Chris Hurn, Jonathan Jay, Terry Rosenfeld, Jay Russell

Committee Chairs and Others Present: Gail Gaustad, Ilene Rosenfeld, Nina Scott, Miriam Whitney, Sara Wright, Tisha Ferguson

Council Members Absent: Chuck Aulino, Ann Hartman, Barbara Reitt

The meeting was called to order by Mike Brooks at 2:15 p.m.

The Council accepted the minutes of the November 9, 2017 Council meeting.

Nominating Committee Report:

Chris Hurn, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that on December 5, 2017 the ballots from the Special Election for Vice President were counted by Gail Gaustad and David Entin, acting as tellers, with Chris Hurn in attendance. All 144 ballots were cast for Ellen Kosmer.

The Council then officially welcomed Ellen as our new Vice President.

Officers' Reports:

President

1. Mike Brooks reported that he sent flowers to Sheila Klem in memory of her husband, Charlie Klem. Mike shared a letter of appreciation from Sheila with the Council.

2. We have received word from Chuck Gillies that he is resigning from LIR, as he and Janet are moving to Pennsylvania in January. Mike wrote to Chuck expressing our thanks and appreciation for all of Chuck's many contributions to LIR over the last twenty years.
3. We have learned that Bob Grant passed away. There will be a memorial service in Florence on Saturday.
4. Appendix F of the Operations Manual is probably in need of review. We expect that representatives from the Special Programs Committee, Summer/Winter Programs Committee, Finance Committee, and Curriculum Committee will need to consider possible modifications. Ilene Rosenfeld will convene a task force of representatives from these committees. Please let Ilene know who will be representing your committees.

Past President

Gordon Wyse is coordinating the Memorial Service that will be held Jan. 4, 2018 (10:00 A.M.-noon) at the Amherst College Alumni House. Please let Gordon know if you are planning to speak at the service.

Treasurer

Please reference two reports (included in the appendix to the minutes) from the Treasurer. We began the year with a projected surplus of approximately \$6,000-this estimate has not changed. As you read the reports, keep in mind that this is the time of year when we spend more than we receive.

Committee Reports:

Curriculum Committee:

A detailed report from the Curriculum Committee is attached as an appendix.

The November Preview of Spring 2018 seminars was quite successful. An informal estimate is that over half of LIR members and over 30 visitors attended. Special thanks to Gordon Wyse and Tisha Ferguson for all of your work on this event.

As Ellen Kosmer moves up to her Vice President position, she will resign her position as Co-Chair of the Curriculum Committee. Jim Harvey has volunteered to serve in that position for the remainder of Ellen's term (June 30, 2019). The Curriculum Committee submitted his name to the Council for approval at this meeting.

Gordon Wyse moved that the Council accept Jim Harvey as Co-Chair of the Curriculum Committee. The motion was seconded, and it passed unanimously.

The Curriculum Committee recommended that we adopt a formal policy requiring that a person proposing a seminar or workshop must have previously participated in a 5CLIR seminar or workshop.

Kathy Campbell moved that we adopt the policy recommended by the Curriculum Committee. The motion was seconded, and it passed unanimously.

Jonathan Jay moved that the above policy be incorporated in the Operations Manual. The motion was seconded, and it passed unanimously.

The Curriculum Committee recommended that we increase the fee that moderators are allowed to charge seminar participants for copying charges for seminar or workshop materials distributed to members from \$2 to \$5 per person. Chris Hurn moved that the above policy be approved and incorporated in the Operations Manual and the seminar catalog. The motion was seconded, and it passed unanimously.

The Curriculum Committee also asked for guidance about handling disruptive members in seminars. After some discussion, the Council recommended that moderators talk about expectations of seminar participants at the beginning of a seminar. If a participant is disruptive, the moderator should talk with the participant to attempt to resolve the issue. The next step in the escalation process would be for the moderator to seek assistance from the LIR Ombudsperson. If these steps have been unsuccessful, a group of LIR members should be consulted before deciding to remove a disruptive participant from a seminar.

Finance Committee:

The Committee is making progress in addressing the issue of event organizers charging their personal credit cards to pay for special program events in advance.

Great Decisions

The Committee has been successful in getting acceptances from speakers for all 4 topics. They are:

Global health: progress and challenges: Tim Ford from UMASS

The waning of Pax Americana: Thomas Johnson from USAID

U.S. global engagement and the military: Laura Reed from UMASS

Media and Foreign Policy: Paul Musgrave from UMASS

The seminars will be held on 4/6/18, 4/13/18, 4/20/18 and 4/27/18 at the Northampton Senior Center.

The fees will be the same as last year, and be revenue neutral. The Committee still needs assistance from someone on the Technology Committee.

Member Services:

The Committee is in the process of planning an April social event. Two possible dates have been identified, and funding is required to support this event.

Joanne Creighton moved to allocate up to \$2,000 to finance the April social event. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Publicity

A new article featuring the “Ancient Grains” course moderated by Katy van Geel and Nina Scott appeared in the Hampshire Life supplement of the Daily Hampshire Gazette on Nov. 24 (Tisha included it in the latest newsletter).

Katy and Nina went to the Gazette last week to meet Brooke Hauser, the new editor of Hampshire Life, and she is enthusiastic about our doing eight more articles related to this course, roughly one/month.

Nina will also be writing an article for the Arthur F. Kinney Center for Renaissance Studies newsletter on our course at the Center.

Winter Programs will feature a visit to the Gazette on Tues., Jan 16 or Wed. Jan 17 (in case of inclement weather on the 16th).

Special Programs

Please reference a detailed report (attached as an appendix) provided by this committee.

Encore Presentations and Lectures will have two new facilitators. They are Nancy Mihevc and Glenn Swanson. Moderators are being contacted for suggestions for topics/speakers.

Office Manager:

All pre-deadline registrations are in our system. The number of registrations is similar to last time.

We will need to make it clear to our members when membership fees are due. Our intern will be working at the Office through spring, and will recommend a replacement intern.

Old business:

1. Liability Issue update

Mike Brooks contacted the State Farm Office in Boston to investigate liability coverage provided under Homeowner's Insurance. He asked the following questions:

Suppose I have some friends over for dinner, an accident occurs, and one of those friends sues me. Am I covered? ANSWER: Of course.

Would I be covered if I volunteered to host an ongoing seminar in my home, an accident occurs, and one of the participants sued me. Am I still covered? ANSWER: Of course.

Suppose the organization has published a catalog of its seminars and lists my home as the meeting location, and the aforementioned accident occurs. Am I still covered? ANSWER: Absolutely.

Finally: under what circumstances, then, would I *not* be covered? ANSWER: You would not be covered if the organization conducts a commercial transaction of some sort in your home. (Think Amway, Tupperware, etc.). If sales activities are involved, the external organization would assume primary liability. Otherwise--no.

Members pay dues to belong to 5CLIR. Does that constitute a "commercial transaction" from the liability insurance perspective? ANSWER: No, since nothing is being sold in the home.

Considering the answers, it seems reasonable to continue allowing occasional in-home seminars and meetings.

The Council also assumes that we should not designate a specific level of required liability insurance, and should not ask people to sign waivers promising not to sue.

Given the above, Mike will share his findings with the Director of Five Colleges, Inc. and hope to have this issue resolved by our next meeting.

2. Seminar Participation Requirement

This subject was deferred to the next meeting, at Ann Hartman's request.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Cynthia Barker
Secretary

December 5CLIR Council Report
Curriculum Committee

The November Preview of Spring 2018 seminars was quite successful, with very good attendance. An informal estimate is that over half of LIR members and over 30 visitors attended. Moderators have begun sending preview materials to Tisha to post for their seminars for members who were unable to attend.

As Ellen Kosmer moves up to her Vice President position, she will resign her position as Co-Chair of the Curriculum Committee. Jim Harvey has volunteered to serve in that position for the remainder of Ellen's term (through June 30, 2019); his name is being submitted to Council for approval at this meeting.

The Curriculum Committee approved a number of changes to the Jotform proposal form, including the following: removing the overall total word limit and returning to word limits for individual fields; slightly reducing those word limits to facilitate each proposal fitting on one catalog page; adding a statement that only current members may moderate a seminar or workshop; adding a box for co-moderators to indicate which one will exercise the moderator privilege; adding a brief explanation of Emeriti auditors; deleting the day and time preference section but retaining the field for day and time unavailability (any preference can be discussed under the "other relevant information" field).

The Curriculum Committee approved updates to the Moderator's Handbook.

Recommended Council action: The Curriculum Committee approved motions recommending that Council take the following actions:

- Adopt a formal policy requiring that a person proposing a seminar or workshop must have previously participated in a 5CLIR seminar or workshop.
- Raise the fee that moderators are allowed to charge to seminar participants for copying charges for seminar or workshop materials distributed to members from \$2.00 to \$5.00 per person. (The Operations Manual (p. 32) contains a policy adopted by Council in 2004 that: "... general information about seminars in the catalog will include the statement that seminar or workshop members in any seminar or workshop *may* be asked to contribute up to \$2.00 each for copying costs incurred by the moderator, whether or not that cost has been stated in the catalog. (11/2004)" The Curriculum Committee believes this amount is out of date and should be raised to \$5.00 per seminar member.

Request for Council Assistance: An issue has been raised about how to handle disruptive members in seminars. What recourse does the moderator have, and can a consistently

disruptive member be excluded for persistently inappropriate behavior such as talking way too much or repeatedly making negative comments? The Committee recognized that referral to the LIR Ombudsman is an appropriate action. But Committee members wondered, beyond that, what other course of action might be pursued. It is a difficult balance between fairness in assignments to seminars which is a core value of LIR (a member currently can't be excluded), and the enjoyment and rights of the other participants. The Committee requests that Council consider whether to adopt a specific policy to guide moderators, the Ombudsperson, and the Office Manager.

- Miriam Whitney and Ellen Kosmer, Co-Chairs, Curriculum Committee

Special Programs Report to
Council
December 14, 2017

The Theatre Interest Group, with Kay Klausewitz, is on hiatus for the winter and will be planning more trips for the coming semester.

The Book Interest Group continues to meet on varying Fridays. Upcoming meeting is January 12. The group will be discussing *A Gentleman in Moscow*, by Amor Towles.

Encore Presentations and Lectures will have two new facilitators running the program. They are Nancy Mihevc and Glenn Swanson. Programs, times, and venue will be announced to the membership in the near future.

French Conversation is meeting at the home of Judith Poole on Friday afternoons.

Opera Prep, with Peg Bedell, is meeting on the Mondays preceding the HD Operas shown at the Hadley Cinemark. The next meeting will be January 26, for the opera showing on January 27, with Encores on January 31. Meetings are now at the Inn at Easthampton Lathrop, 2-3 PM.

Photography Near and Far, with Marty Espinola, continues to meet on the first Tuesday of the month, 12:30-1:45 PM, at the Amherst Media Center.

Salon Music continues with Chuck Aulino on the third Friday of each month at the Northampton Community Music Center, 10:30 AM

The next Science Round Table, with John Armstrong and Larry Ambs, will meet on Thursday, December 21, from 2:00 to 3:30 pm, at The Hitchcock Center for the Environment, Rte. 116, Amherst (just north of the entrance to Hampshire College). The featured speaker will be Professor Elizabeth Vierling of the UMass Biochemistry Department. She will be speaking on "GMOS (genetically modified organisms) and the scientific evidence of their utility and safety."

Viewpoints, with Hy Edelstein, continues to meet on the first Thursday of each month at Highland Valley Elder Services in Florence.

Respectfully submitted,
Ilene Rosenfeld
Chairperson
Special Programs Committee