Minutes 11/14 - Culminating Task Force

1. Summary of where we are:
   a. Culminating experience course would be:
      i. A 3 credit course in which the students work collaboratively to address a current problem relevant to the theme.
      ii. Goal to synthesize students’ learning over their 3/4 years, reflect on what they’ve learned and where they’re going.
   b. Project would be student-driven, but the nature of the project would depend on faculty’s expertise
      i. Project could be a community-based learning project, but it’s not required to be.

2. General discussion points:
   a. Service and justice as core themes?
   b. How much content will faculty member bring to the course? Relying solely/primarily on students to draw on their experiences to guide the course could be dicey.
   c. Will faculty feel comfortable teaching a course if the focus is outside of their expertise? How much expertise do they need to lead the course effectively? Will some disciplines be left out?
      i. Stressed the faculty could opt in or out and would have some flexibility to tailor to teaching styles
   d. Possibility of small number of readings common to all sections. To be prompts for thought and reflection rather than a focus of literary analysis.
   e. Resource question: who will teach the course? Limit to small number of departments, or open wide? Are particular departments better equipped to address larger issues we want the core to address.
   f. Would the culminating experience courses fit within the themes? Could be very problematic practically; would need to get into specific c.e.’s in order to make it work.
   g. How to maintain coherence of the core when there are many sections taught by many faculty? Need to be sure that the c.e. Isn’t simply a utility-focused problem-solving exercise; need to also consider how larger issues/questions frame/condition the specific project.
   h. Anxieties around common readings: who will choose, will they be updated regularly, will offerings be diverse? Steering committee important for doing this well.
   i. Template would list learning outcomes for the class; the 3(?) readings shared by all sections, and a project that demonstrates x, y, z; reflective aspect that addresses big questions/themes; plus room for prof to tailor the course to their expertise and perspective.
i. Describe the parameters of the course (key elements that need to be present so that there is coherence)
   
ii. would be helpful to generate examples that shows diverse ways that this could work.
   
   j. Learning outcome #6: cooperative & cross-disciplinary problem-solving -- should include theological/philosophical perspective.
   
   k. Generate a list of people who could contribute to shaping the outline, goals, framework of the course.
   
   l. Departments need to commit to teaching x number of sections for x semesters; don’t rely on individual faculty to volunteer (or unvolunteer).
   
   m. Plan B: Perhaps identify a set number of depts to offer the sections for a given period of time; then other departments can get involved the next period.

2. For next meeting:
   
   a. What would the template look like? Come up with possible templates and examples of them.

   Pair up:
   
   John and John
   Conor and Kati
   James and Beth
   Amber and Ellen