

An Invitation from the Dean

Colleagues,

I hope you will plan to attend this year's May Faculty College, May 23rd – May 25th. This gathering has evolved into a strategic planning conference for the academic program; it is a time when faculty from across the disciplines gather to talk about the theory and practice of our common purpose, the liberal education of our students.

This year's theme, "Assessment for Innovation and Transformation," signals our intention to build upon the work on learning goals we have already begun, but also to make clear that the real purpose of this work is not to prepare a report for Middle States, but to scrutinize, systematically and across the curriculum, the evidence we can gather about the extent to which our students are engaged with, and achieving the aims and objectives of, our core mission. To be meaningful, our efforts at research should provide the basis for a continuous process of critical reflection on our curriculum and pedagogy, reflection which, in turn, informs change.

In the opening plenary, Christine Zimmerman and I will collaborate on a presentation that will begin with an analysis of data that speaks to our students' sense of purpose and achievement at St. Lawrence. We will then seek to engage you in a discussion of two texts, St. Lawrence's statement of Aims and Objectives, and the statement recently published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), "Academic Freedom and Educational Responsibility."

From this discussion of our core mission, the schedule of May Faculty College will unfold in a way designed to give participants ample opportunity to discuss the theory and practice of assessment that is grounded in research and undertaken for the purpose of continuous innovation. Shortly, you will receive a complete schedule of sessions. I am sure you will agree that it is packed with substantive issues balanced with very practical guidance and information.

Please, then, plan to attend this year's May Faculty College. It is an important opportunity to talk with your colleagues from across the disciplines, and to shape the future of our work together.

Thank you,

Grant Cornwell

Vice President of the University and Dean of Academic Affairs