March 2, 2012

1)  I support the overall objective of providing opportunities for our
students to learn skills that would aid help them in entrepreneurship.
 I think this is good for both our students (who get jobs) and society
as a whole.  Both businesses and society benefit from having people
with strong critical thinking skills and societal awareness, like our
students.

2).  I wholeheartedly support the development of the winterim program
as well as the expansion of internships and experiential learning
opportunities.  I personally have an interest in offering a practicum
opportunity in conjunction with my public policy curriculum.  The
effects of public policy are ubiquitous I think it would be beneficial
for students to be able to both experience and academically evaluate
how policy affects the private sector.

3)  I'm wary possible curricular changes to create an entrepreneurship
minor or major.  In particular, I'm wary of the "selection effects"
this change could have on our student enrollment.  I recognize that
attracting more (and male) students is a worthy goal, but I worry
about the type of students that this program could attract.  I don't
necessary worry about the observable "quality" of the student going
down because I trust that our admission department would keep
standards high.  I do, however, worry about the "unobservable" quality
of the students.  It seems to me that our school thrives on students
who are set on "exploration and discovery".  If even a fraction of the
students who come to Lewis and Clark expressly seek out what they
consider to be something similar to a pre-professional program it
would be a significant detriment to our study body.  This, of course,
is pure conjecture and I always like to make decisions on data, not
conjecture.  For that reason I would really like to see some analysis
-- both quantitative and qualitative - of the experiences of our peer
schools in this regard.

4) Looking at the list of peer schools I was most intrigued by
Oberlin's model.  I also wanted to note that my alma mater, Drew
University, implemented a business program in the last decade
("Department of Economics & Business Studies"), so they should be
added to your list.  Drew and Lewis and Clark actually have a lot of
similarities!

5) Finally, I also wanted to note that, based in part on my experience
at Drew, I think that any entrepreneurship program should be kept
entirely separate from the Economics department.  The skills of an
economist and the skills of a entrepreneur are wildly different.  I
think that these disciplines are too often mixed simply because they
both have to do with money!  It's a silly association but I see it
happen all the time  and I wouldn't want it to happen here.

Ellen Seljan