

Dear Professor Pearce,

Thank you very much for your recent correspondence. I wish that I could have attended the Lampeter Society dinner this year to hear your remarks in person. They are the most extensive public discussion of Lampeter policy that I have seen since graduating twenty five years ago.

I think we can all agree on most of your points. The remaining differences of opinion seem mostly about relative priorities, which are always tough calls. No one agrees on everything.

There are several issues that I would like to comment upon:

1. Fundraising. I don't think Lampeter needs to match the foundations of the established American colleges, or that its foundation needs to provide 30% of annual operating income (requiring a 50 GBS endowment) in the short to mid term - though I don't see why this couldn't be the long term goal. On the other hand a minimum of 10 million GBS is a reasonable target, say over 10 years, which is a good planning horizon for establishing a foundation that will endure. Reaching this kind of goal requires starting a program now that will begin to contribute in some small ways, as state funding becomes less available. I was glad to see that the Council will review this priority.

2. Rankings. Has the suggestion of lobbying for a change of categories been considered, so there is one for major universities and one for small specialized and liberal arts colleges? If the categories are changed Lampeter's relative position should improve automatically. The College would have to lobby also for its preference on how the categories are determined.

3. Governance. Would it be possible to place information about the Lampeter Council on the Lampeter website? This is quite common for most companies and I think I've seen it done at other universities. I am sure that, as you say, the Council is not quite the bunch of retired luminaries and gentlemen farmers (I forgot to mention superannuated professors) that I described, but it would be reassuring to know who they are and what qualifications they possess to direct Lampeter into a secure future.

4. There was no mention in your remarks about curriculum development. An efficient allocation of Lampeter's resources requires, in my opinion, focus on a selected number of liberal arts programs. In this scenario the rest of the departments - languages, business studies, IT become support subjects.

Not all of my colleagues in the 16 Club Returners or other alumni agree with this. At least one member very knowledgeable in university marketing told me recently that he believes the college should be more aggressive in adding programs based on market research of potential candidates.

5. University Alliances. When the Trinity alliance was first proposed several years ago I was asked by the Lampeter Society to prepare a consulting report on the proposal that was an alternative to the one commissioned by the College Administration. This was submitted to the Vice Chancellor but I received no acknowledgement or reply. I did receive a thoughtful call from the principal of Trinity.

I wrote that I believed that there were useful synergies in such an alliance. I suggested that Part One for all students be offered at Trinity. Those that wanted to continue in Mathematics or Theatre, for example, would stay at the Trinity campus for three years. Those who wanted to study other subjects would spend the next two years at the Lampeter campus. Taught graduate programs and research would be conducted in Lampeter.

Because of the geographic distance I also recommended that the Highmead Estate be purchased and the the central administration of the colleges be moved there. I suggested also that the building could be used as a conference center and an institute - at that time an institute for the study of the Welsh Diaspora, which would be funded partly by financially

successful descendants of Welsh emigres, who could also use the rooms while visiting. I also believed that by moving administration to Highmead some of the political difficulties between Lampeter and Trinity staff at the time would be alleviated.

Eventually Highmead became the a private institute for Islamic studies. However, under current circumstances there might be an argument for the College and Board of Directors to consider bringing this Institue under the direction of an expanded Lampeter, integrate the programs offered there under the Theology Department to assure academic credibilty, and move the administration of Lampeter and Trininty there. One might expect funding to be available for this from several sources. Highmead would again be the geographical administrative center for an expanded Lampeter Trinity allliance. Many interests would be served.

6. Both the open letter and your reply are being read daily. Stuart Tilley, the webmaster, has noted a significant increase of hits on the site. I have also received several messages from people associated with Lampeter on the subject, though for the reason below they will remain anonymous.

The debate might be wider if the unfortunate threat to Lampeter staff to desist from engaging in any media contact under pain of disciplinary action be rescinded. While this was not directed at my correspondence it has a chilling effect on anyone who reads the order. It is overkill at Lampeter.

Since you were on holidays at the time of the edict, one wonders again, as noted in my open letter, if the current governing structure is optimized. It seems not.

Sincerely,

Robert Fonow