

## Clarke Forum for Contemporary Issues

### Policy/Procedure

The Clarke Forum for Contemporary Issues is founded on two principles. First, the forum affirms Dickinson's belief that education in the liberal arts is the best preparation for the challenges of citizenship and career. Programming aims literally at "bringing the liberal arts to life" by connecting students' experience in the classroom with compelling issues confronting our local, national, and international communities. The forum also connects students to prominent individuals working in a wide array of professions. All activities are open to participation by the entire Dickinson community.

Second, the forum emphasizes the application of interdisciplinary approaches to contemporary issues. One of the most striking characteristics of today's society is its complexity. As citizens, our students will need to draw information and insight from widely differing disciplines to deal with such issues as health care, genetic engineering, environmental regulation, and international peacekeeping. Six of the college's interdisciplinary programs sponsor the forum: American Studies; Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; Environmental Studies; International Studies, Business and Management; Policy Studies; and Women's Studies.

The forum is named for Dickinson Trustee Emeritus Henry D. Clarke, Jr., founder and chief benefactor. Staff includes Executive Director, Professor of Political Science, Harold L. Pohlman; Associate Director Karen Freese; Program Coordinator Jolie Rankin; Program Assistant Kim Flinchbaugh and eight to ten student Project Managers. Extensive responsibility for designing, publicizing, and implementing programs is assigned to the student staff, who receive valuable organizational and communications experience. Ideas for individual programs and events are solicited from all Dickinsonians - students, faculty, administrators, trustees, alumni - as well as the larger community.

Activities include the following:

#### *Interdisciplinary Education*

The forum promotes the college's visibility as a leader in this vital area of higher education. It encourages efforts to enhance the college's interdisciplinary course and program offerings. Activities range from support for individual faculty in designing courses to conferences on interdisciplinary education.

#### *Annual Theme*

Each year, the forum devotes a major portion of its resources to activities organized around a single topic or theme. Lectures, panels, and symposia on the topic are coordinated with academic course offerings. Annual themes to date are Democratization (1994-95), Race & Ethnicity: The Politics of Identity (1995-96), Environmental Sustainability (1996-97), Citizenship (1997-98), Education, Power, and Responsibility (1998-99), Corporations and Globalization (1999-2000), War (2000-01), Crossing Borders (2001-02; 2002-03), For Richer, For Poorer; Globalization Under Attack (2003-04), Religion

## College Centers and Programs: Clarke Forum for Contemporary Issues

and Political Power (2004-05), Memory (2005-06), Energy (2006-07), A Gendered World (2007-08), Human Rights (2008-09), and Popular Culture: Power, Politics, and Resistance (2009-10).

### *Lectures, Panels, and Symposia*

The forum sponsors presentations ranging from individual lectures to symposia and conferences, each focusing on a pressing contemporary issue. For example, the forum has sponsored events on environmental sustainability, the war in Iraq, perspectives on the death penalty, transgender and transsexual issues, genomics, memorials and commemoration and the new Mediterranean.

<b>Related Information</b>
----------------------------

<b>History/Revision Information</b>
-------------------------------------

**Responsible Office/Division:**

**Effective Date:**

**Last Amended Date:**

**Next Review Date:**

**Also Found In:**      Bulletin