

Steering Committee

7/14/18 10:00am Pacific

Minutes

Facilitator: Laura

Notes: Ealasaid

Present: Laura, Sandra, Ealasaid, Jenn, Nancy, Ari, Ryan

1. Facilitator leads everyone in taking a breath together and reciting the Holy Mother prayer
2. Approve minutes from previous meeting
 - a) Nancy moves to approve, Laura seconds, done.
3. Updates on action items from the previous meeting:
 - a) Jenn: reaching out to those joining research pillar, reach out to Morningstar in general about art for our sites.
 - b) did not get to her action items, been focused on the retreat.
 - c) Laura: Help with the set up of slack channels, be the official nag about email follow up on incorporation (in 1 week) and the teaching pillar status (2 weeks)
 - i. Done
 - d) Nancy - draft communication guideline for Ari and Laura's ongoing work on the orientation doc
 - i. Emergency, hasn't finished.
 - e) Ryan – Teaching Pillar plan of action
 - i. Lots of active discussion, no resolution yet but working on it.
 - ii. [Much discussion]
 - iii. Nancy: Not sure where we need to have this discussion. Email in the pillar isn't enough, but this isn't the place to have it either. We have an issue around power and authority – who has decision-making power about what, we need to sort that out.
 - iv. Ryan: agrees strongly about the venue for this discussion, feeling uncomfortable that it's being hashed out here. One of the teaching members suggested we abolish the pillar because Steering has to approve everything so why even have the pillar. We originally had a system with greater autonomy for the pillars.
 - v. Ryan: The pillar should make a decision and implement that decision. If we have to bring the proposal to steering, we won't have time. Brought up options as a status report, not asking steering to judge the matter but giving an update. Wants Teaching to make the decision.
 - vi. Sandra: when would the decision be made?

- vii. Ryan: within the month. If we really want to start the modules in September, need to get this sorted now.
- viii. Laura: Between now and next steering meeting, what does pillar need from us?
- ix. Ryan: Doesn't think they need anything. Will need stuff from Temple & Tech, all the options require forums/slack/something. That's it.
- x. Ealasaid: let's let teaching figure this out, if they do something that doesn't work, they can reassess.
- f) Sandra: incorporation work, membership org write up, Slack channel set up when needed, pinging Lenni and introducing Katie and Lenni at the next chat.
 - i. Hasn't been able to spend much time on it – was sick then changed jobs. Keep trying to find a few hours here and there with stuff.
 - ii. Katie couldn't make the chat, maybe the next chat? Will there be one during the retreat?
 - iii. Jenn: there's one on the schedule.
 - iv. Laura: Let's post about it and let people suggest agenda items in that forum.

4. Pillar and Other Standing Reports

- a) Research & Alumni (Jenn)
 - i. Not much of an update. Did have one person who hasn't been very active lately email to ask about it. Gave them the alumni definition, but never heard back. Also someone else reached out asking for new cords.
- b) Teaching & Curriculum Pillar (Ryan)
 - i. See above.
- c) Temple & Tech Pillar (Laura)
 - i. Nothing to unveil but do have updates.
 - ii. Been doing some testing. Engine for backend of current worksite is Wordpress, which has a forum built in! Password protected, etc. and can integrate our Google calendar and everything!
 - iii. We have the wiki bones set up, working on fleshing that out.
- d) Retreat Committee (Jenn)
 - i. Met! Schedule locked down. Going well. Only thing left is to sort out food stuff.
- e) Where are we spending tuition money, and what are students getting from it? [need better way to say this]
 - i. Sandra: Don't really have time/resources now, let's all think about this. We need to figure out a realistic tuition by figuring out what all we need to operate and then doing the math. We don't know how much insurance will be, etc. let's leave on the agenda for next month, discuss more then. Let's let the school's energy be on the retreat for now. Things always shift a bit after retreats.

f) Any new business?

- i. Ryan: kind of a big question, but we have some time. Wants to revise/look at our mission statement and what we plan on actually doing going forward. Not "how are we teaching" but "why are we teaching." Are we intending to remain just our group and not add more people? Or are we going to try to teach the general public with the intent on making the tools available? Or are we going to teach publicly to build up new members and bring them into the school? The two coming in joined via an already-completed Elements class. Do we want to keep doing Elements as a way to bring people in or not, and if not, do we want to teach publicly without the intent of bringing in new students?
- ii. Nancy: that's a really big question. If the format of teaching is an all-school question, this is definitely an all-school discussion.
- iii. Sandra: let's look at our current mission statement.
- iv. Ryan has it, read it out.
- v. Laura: would love a copy to share/discuss at the retreat.
- vi. Sandra: it should be posted somewhere
- vii. Laura: it's wonderfully strong and incredibly vague
- viii. Sandra: the mission statement was created by the whole school, not Thorn or Steering, probably at a retreat, then amended at another retreat? If we're going to amend this, the members have to be involved. Also, mission statements are supposed to be aspirational
- ix. Ari mailed out to everyone.
- x. Ryan: also thinking about: are we a school or a tradition?
- xi. Laura: this is a really big conversation.
- xii. Ryan: yes. But it's important, if we're a school, our primary function is to teach; if our primary function is something else, we need to sort it out. Something to figure out.
- xiii. Laura: where is the right place to have this conversation? Moodle, all school chat, conversation at retreat that brings in people who can't make it? This is an important all-school conversation, but how to we bring people in? We don't have to decide right now, we can say we'll think about it.
- xiv. Sandra: these are really good questions for everybody to think about. Also some of these questions need to be sorted out individually, not as a group – like, are we trying to take all of this work to everyone in the world? What is our ambition/mission? Folks will have different internal missions. Likes that the mission statement is broad enough to include a lot of different people. It's good to think about this stuff, though. Mission statements need to be re-evaluated. Let's have people sit with

these questions and get their own answers. Doesn't want to narrow our mission to the point where it excludes people who are at a different place. There's still a place for people in the school who don't have that evangelical calling.

xv. [Discussion]

xvi. Sandra: this was part of my point about not excluding people/goals. We're expanding, we're teaching, we have a process to send teachers out (it's not working but it's there). We're working this out. We've had this question come up at least three times a year every year since 2013. Very tired of answering it. This has been a difficult existential process. If we say "yes we are all of these things; we haven't implemented them yet but this is what we've agreed" we want to give each other support. We want to be a teaching org that supports folks with a common basis of knowledge, and we want to provide support for folks who want to take these teachings to a wider audience. We need to focus on one thing at a time, and focusing on one things doesn't mean abandoning the others.

xvii. Sandra: We keep stopping to discuss and taking time we do not have. We have to get the incorporation sorted out.

g) Ryan: We're all in the US, can steering meet on a weeknight?

i. Laura: goes to bed early and is on the East coast. Time Zones are a problem.

ii. Sandra: could only do it if it were during work lunch hour. Doesn't get home until 7ish on weeknights, which is too late for E coast.

iii. Laura: it's good to ask these questions periodically, appreciates him bringing it up

iv. Nancy: every week is different. [has to go]

v. Sounds like general consensus is that we don't have a good weekday time.

h) Go over everyone's action items for next time

i. Jenn: Reaching out to those joining research pillar, reach out to Morningstar in general about art for our sites. Also retreat stuff

ii. Laura – continue to set up slack stuff, post to whole school about the next all-school chat, also do a post about our mission statement.

iii. Nancy - draft communication guideline for Ari and Laura's ongoing work on the orientation doc

iv. Sandra - incorporation work, membership org write up/, Slack channel set up when needed, pinging Lenni and introducing Katie and Lenni at the next chat.

i) Facilitator leads breathing and prayer to close.