The Role of Liberal Arts Colleges in the Changing Landscape of the Professoriate

During the past 20 years there has been an increasing volume of literature focusing on the preparation of doctoral students for careers in the professoriate. The impetus for this attention from scholars, researchers, policy makers, and other stakeholders stems from the growing recognition that doctoral preparation and training as historically conceptualized are not consonant with the expectations, demands, and challenges that characterize 21st-century higher education. It is clear that the landscape of the professoriate is changing and that a range of higher education institutions — from liberal arts colleges to doctoral research universities — should contribute to the support and definition of this transformation.

Lawrence University, a nationally recognized college of the liberal arts and sciences with a music conservatory, located in Appleton, Wisconsin, is hosting a conference on October 25 and 26, 2007, on the changing landscape of the professoriate. The purpose of the conference is to bring together scholars who are at the center of discussions and research on doctoral and post-doctoral professional development. Researchers at Lawrence will be presenting the findings from a two-year study funded by the Teagle Foundation about the Lawrence University Fellows in the Liberal Arts and Sciences program. A primary goal of this program is to develop the future professoriate by providing recent Ph.D.s with mentoring, teaching opportunities, and research collaborations that will better prepare them for careers at selective liberal arts colleges. For more information about the Lawrence Fellows program, visit www.lawrence.edu/dept/fellows.

We invite you to submit abstracts of papers and/or presentations that describe, discuss, and/or evaluate innovative programs that contribute to the career preparation of doctoral and post-doctoral students. Please send your abstract by May 18, 2007, to Bill Skinner, director of research administration, Lawrence University, P.O. Box 599, Appleton, WI 54912 or e-mail it to william.f.skinner@lawrence.edu. Additional information about the conference can be found at www.lawrence.edu/dept/ora in June.