

COLLOQUIUM BY MARCIA B. FRANCE

“CHALLENGES OF DELIVERING A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: IMPLICATIONS FOR DKU”

TIME: 3:15-4:00 PM, MONDAY, 23 APRIL 2018

VENUE: ACADEMIC BUILDING 1079

“Challenges of Delivering A Liberal Arts Education in The 21st Century: Implications for DKU”

Speaker: Marcia B. France, John T. Herwick, M.D. Professor of Chemistry, Associate Provost, Washington and Lee University

ABSTRACT:

Dire headlines questioning the value of a liberal arts education regularly appear in the U.S. media. Criticism of the high costs of college and condemnation of “frivolous” courses like philosophy or art history have become commonplace. Similar attitudes are prevalent in China and much of the rest of the world, where students typically specialize earlier, and education is more focused on career preparation. But, the fact is, the world is constantly changing. Technology is rendering old jobs obsolete. Few people end their careers doing exactly what they trained for. Done effectively, a liberal arts education equips graduates with precisely what they need – the creativity and lifelong learning skills necessary to change with the world. After a brief overview of some of the challenges of delivering a 21st-century liberal arts education effectively, the focus will be on the implications of three of these challenges for DKU as it launches its new undergraduate program in China:

1. Faculty Development. An effective 21st-century liberal arts curriculum incorporates high impact practices such as active pedagogies, collaborative work, undergraduate research, and community-based learning – practices that the faculty themselves may not have been exposed to in their own educations.

2. Inclusion. An effective liberal arts education produces globally conscious citizens who respect those from different backgrounds and cultures. How can a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere that supports the needs of a diverse population be cultivated?
3. Assessment. Every liberal arts institution has its own distinctive mission and must design appropriate means of assessment to ensure it is achieving its goals. How can assessment data be gathered and used effectively to improve learning outcomes and implement innovative change?

The presentation will conclude by highlighting three opportunities for DKU.

BIO:

Marcia B. France is the John T. Herwick, M.D. Professor of Chemistry and Associate Provost at Washington and Lee University. She was Associate Dean of the College from 2012-2017. She earned her S.B. in chemistry at MIT, where she did undergraduate research under 2001 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry K. Barry Sharpless, and her M.S. in chemistry at Yale University. She was a National Science Foundation Pre-Doctoral Fellow at Caltech, where she earned her Ph.D. in organic chemistry. Her work on the development of ruthenium catalysts for olefin metathesis was cited in the 2005 Nobel Prize address by her research mentor, Robert H. Grubbs. Dr. France has served as a visiting research scientist at Dupont, Stanford University, the University of St Andrews, and the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique/AgroParisTech. She teaches introductory and advanced organic chemistry as well as a spring term abroad course on the Science of Cooking in Italy. An advocate for international education, Dr. France helped co-found the W&L-St Andrews study abroad program. She oversees the academic advising program, runs the Student Research Scholars program, and serves as co-chair of the University Committee on Inclusiveness and Campus Climate. She has previously served as chair of the Graduate Fellowships Committee, the Committee on Automatic Rule and Reinstatement, the STEM Pedagogy Working Group, the Hillel Advisory Board, and the Phi Beta Kappa Executive Board. She plays flute and piccolo with the Rockbridge Symphony Orchestra and the W&L University Wind Ensemble.

This event is open to all. For any queries email yg73@duke.edu or call 3665 7149.