

Providing for Tomorrow's Students: Making A Better CMC

CMC CHANGES LIVES: every student's life in his or her unique way. While we cannot predict how this will happen, we can provide a rich environment with so many fine opportunities that, we trust, it will. We tailor to the individual, as outstanding faculty transform students with intimate classrooms, international internships, and academic travel.

Since redefining liberal arts education (starting with discussions among future trustees in the 1930s), Claremont McKenna College has remained faithful to its founding principles. First, a sound liberal arts education includes the study of history, literature, and philosophy; training in analytic thought and clear writing; and work in science and mathematics. Second—and most important—a CMC liberal arts education recognizes that the economy influences culture and government, and that one must study what Founding President George Benson referred to as political economy to understand and shape human experience.

As CMC has applied its founding principles, it has refined its definition of liberal arts. In the 1970s, the College required calculus of all students—an act that, in the view of former Dean of Admission Emery Walker, significantly changed CMC's selectivity. There have been other changes and augmentations: going coeducational in 1976, for instance, was a monumental redirection of the College, even as we adhered to those founding principles. Moreover, the College introduced an interdisciplinary approach to the study of leadership, including both course work and co-curricular activities.

Today those principles still guide us as we embark on The Campaign for Claremont McKenna. We do not seek to make a *new* or *different* CMC, but a *better* CMC. Specific requirements may change, “irreplaceable” courses may morph into something else, we will become somewhat larger. But today's students will continue to discover kindred spirits when they meet alumni from one or two or five decades earlier.

As we contemplate tomorrow's CMC, we must envision the future by drawing upon a few examples of what we know:

- Our facilities served better in 1950 or 1970 than they do in 2008. Faculty and students are crammed into inadequate and unsuitable space.

- Most high schools have better athletic facilities than we do.

- Our government program, one of the best and largest among small colleges, cannot cover all desired aspects.



- Our freshman curriculum should include a revitalized humanities seminar program.

- We are unable, even with the resources of our consortium, to teach what we should about Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa. Our graduates are increasingly likely to spend parts of their lives around the globe.

The Campaign for Claremont McKenna will infuse the College with new revenues, faculty, students, and facilities, and increased financial aid. Elsewhere in this magazine you will find more detailed plans for what the Campaign will bring.

Our Trustees have designed the most ambitious campaign in the history of liberal arts education; if you consider our size, perhaps the most ambitious campaign ever in American higher education. They have done so because we must provide for our future and for that of tomorrow's students, and because there are men and women who believe enough in Claremont McKenna College and its mission to make our goal a reality.

Pamela B. Gann

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