Coffee House Open for Good

Her excitement of seeing this project come to life is also shared by Professor of Trauma and Conflict Studies and Program Director of the University Accord Barry Hart. He confesses, “I think the main thing this campus has needed for a long time is a central focus place. We really want to make this inviting to everyone on campus.”

Hart describes Common Grounds as “a nebulous place between a business and a central meeting place for students, faculty, and staff.” This nebulous place can be seen in action Thursday at 9 p.m. when a forum will held in Common Grounds to discuss the 200 signature petition sent to the Board of Trustees. From a Nov. 26 faculty and staff meeting last year, a representative group consisting of faculty, staff, and one student was formed to help facilitate discussion about pertinent issues. This group called the Listening and Facilitation Group who has a sub-group, which is the one holding Thursday’s discussion.

Hart says the basis of this event is to, “provide a forum for people to talk about the fact that the board of trustees responded, what their response was, and how they felt about that response, and what they’d like to do about that response.”

But the issues being dealt with aren’t limited to the Trustees’ statement. Military involvement, scriptural interpretation, homosexuality, and academic freedom are all areas the forum wants to address. Students are welcome and invited to attend, especially because the topics, like academic freedom, need their input.

Scheduling discussions, though, are not the only motivation to visit the coffee house. Hart especially encourages professors to take advantage of this new meeting spot to hold formal or informal discussions in their subject area. He pointed out that “any kind of conversation in this academic environment, and as Christians has something to do with this, which asks us students who will then make choices about what vocations we want,” adding that, “the conversations don’t have to specifically be focused on, Prof. Thirst therefore I must do this or this.” It really has to do with looking at who we are as human beings seeking higher education, seeking understanding about what we want to do in life as Christians.

To illustrate this point, Hart says that a physics professor can hold a discussion even if it does not strictly pertain to Christianity. Many topics can involve the world, which aids students in understanding their lives better. This helps the student determine where he or she wants to go in their lives. This vocation aspect of dialogue ultimately fits in with the Lilly Grant’s emphasis on Christian jobs and the students’ futures.

Hart continued to say that Common Grounds is “a place for dialogue on serious issues and we will take those issues seriously and take life seriously, as Christians. We’re going to then delve into life with the energy and the grace that comes from our faith. And our faith will both inform our intellect, and our intellect will help shape our faith journey.”

The coffee house is not limited to its posted hours, either. With advance notice of at least a few days, clubs, organizations, or featured guests can hold discussions there for a small fee. There will even be a coffee house employee who will be on hand to make drinks and snacks for the meeting or event.

Michelle Muselman, SIFE’s secretary and the project manager, has played an important role in preparing the coffee house. While most students were watching the Super Bowl, she dutifully prepared the coffee house employees and was able to explore set hours based on the amount of business it received.

On the day the first grand opening encouraged those behind the coffee house: Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), University Accord, and the Lilly Grant project. They were able to plan a set of operating hours based on when they had the most business.

To help students cope with 8 a.m. classes, Common Grounds will be open from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. on weekdays, and appraises those who want to mellow after dinner by re-opening from 7 p.m. until midnight. Weekend hours will be from 7 p.m. until midnight.

Jeremy Yoder
Editor-in-Chief

Earnest: Brit-Accented Fun

They don’t write comedy like they used to. Fortunately, that doesn’t mean that modern Hollywood can’t produce fine film adaptations of great old plays.

Exhibit A is Miramax’s recent movie The Importance of Being Earnest, based on the play by Oscar Wilde. True to the original, Earnest is in style, deftly plotted, and utterly hilarious.

For those not familiar with turn-of-the-last-century British drama, The Importance of Being Earnest concerns the tangled web woven by Worthing (Colin Firth) and his friend Montcrieff (Rupert Everett) when they start inventing other people. Worthing has Earnest, a fictional brother and alter ego whose exploits give him an excuse to leave his country estate and visit the city; Montcrieff has Bunbury, an alter ego whose whereabouts are unspecified.

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Michelle Muselman describes Common Grounds as an “enjoyable atmosphere where you can have a good time and have good coffee.” There is even talk that if the coffee house is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use. The coffee house may have just begun, but already it is utilized more, it may expand its use.