

## **Pathway to Citizenship: Revolving Themes at Ferrum**

Each year on a three-year rotating basis, a different school at Ferrum spearheads planning for a theme central to critical issues of local/national/global understanding. All parts of the college participate. Activities include both learning about key issues and getting involved in them, understanding the complexity and difficulty of some problems and also gaining confidence in dealing with them. Many activities involve teachers, staff, and administration learning alongside the students.

There are four main purposes for the revolving themes initiative:

- To help realize student outcomes for the college's mission of preparing students to be citizens of their community, nation, and world;
- To integrate activities within and across the three schools, as well as link with other major campus components;
- To provide a focus for participatory and service learning;
- To provide a context through which students, faculty, staff, and administration might learn together about compelling issues of our time.

Imbedded in the values and culture of each of Ferrum's schools are issues which go to the core of a person's involvement (citizenship) in community, nation, and world. They are the issues faculty and staff listed in brainstorming sessions during the fall of 2006. They are the same issues focused upon in several years of Salzburg seminars on globalization and by the United Nations World Summit of 2005 and by countless writers, leaders, and activists of the last quarter century.

- School of Natural Science & Mathematics—The Environment
- School of Social Science—Social and Economic Justice: Global and Regional Connections
- School of Arts & Humanities—Today's Problems and Legacies of the Past

Because undergraduates normally take four years to graduate, during their last year students will be reconnecting with the theme of their freshman year, hopefully with a more mature perspective and with incentive to take leadership in planning and discussion.