

Minutes - Strategic Planning Steering Committee (Revised)
Thursday, November 20, 2008

Attendance: Mark Prus, Raymond Franco, Lynn Anderson, Greg Sharer, Bill Buxton, Caroline Kaltefleiter, Chris Cirmo, Mark Yacavone, and John Shirley

Overview

The meeting began at 8:34 a.m. Samples of strategic planning documents from other institutions, including the vision and glossary of strategic planning terms from University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire, and University of Buffalo, UB2020 plan, were summarized.

Timeline

Ray Franco reported that he met with the College Foundation Board and they consider as a major obstacle the lack of a focused plan and corresponding action steps. The Foundation has made an effort to articulate the institutional goals to make the case for support but the lack of a clear plan is hindering the process. The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for April and they are looking forward to a more articulate plan to build a case for support. It would therefore help the Foundation to have a draft institutional strategic plan in place by April 2009 rather than at the start of the Fall 2009 semester, as was discussed earlier by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Feedback

- The beginning of the spring semester seems more feasible to gather faculty input; it might be a little tougher now with the end of the semester in sight, and with everyone so tuned into the looming financial crisis.
- Regarding support for external consultation, it may be expensive; an internal facilitator may have the expertise but not the time; it would therefore be worthwhile to spend the money for an external consultant since a good outcome requires both expertise and time.
- If we are thinking external consultant, we need to be very specific and articulate about our expectations
- A facilitator is necessary to provide a clear framework for the process
- Get input on how UB went about their plan.

There was discussion about whether to use the information from the Branding Initiative, the Academic Strategic Plan, Core Attributes, etc. to drive the vision or come up with a vision. Prus stated that while parts of the mission are pretty timeless, the vision is more of the institution's aspirations in X number of years. There is now a need to reaffirm/tweak the mission, usually a ten-year process. The question was whether to move bottom up or top down for this process. Two separate issues were considered:

- Do we collect data and develop a vision based on the data
- Or do we develop a vision statement and then develop a plan to fit that vision

The consensus was to develop a vision statement with input from the campus community. All areas will have to participate in the process, which is expected to drive resource allocation.

Timeline Decision: Have a draft of the guiding document ready by April 17, 2009 and explore the possibility of having an expert who will serve as project facilitator/external consultant.

Process:

Prus went over the duties of the Long Range Planning Committee, noting that its charge is directly related to matters designated by the Faculty Senate, whereas, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee was designated by the President with a mission which encompasses the entire campus. He added that he and Chris Cirmo, current chair of the LRP committee, have agreed that there is a role for the LRP Committee to play in gathering faculty input.

Cirmo reported that the LRP Committee had initially expressed concern regarding its relationship with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, its role in the process, and low faculty representation. He added that he had notified the LRP committee members that the Strategic Planning Steering Committee's mission was focused on the whole campus, and not just faculty. According to him, the LRP Committee, which works with the academic side of the campus, sees its role as developing a process to gather input from faculty, professionals and librarians. Cirmo will notify the LRP Committee about the recommendation of a facilitator's guidance in developing a framework for the process. Cirmo went on to express his concern about CSEA's role and input in the process since the union has no representation on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and was not covered under the charge for the LRP Committee. There was consensus to include a representative from the CSEA on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Greg Sharer's recommended that someone from Student Affairs serve on the LRP committee. He stressed the importance of a process that would allow all voices from across the campus to be heard.

The question of student representation on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee also came up. The consensus was students not serve on the committee since they are in transit and not always around. In response, Sharer recommended that planning should involve how students can play a role on the strategic planning process, not necessarily on the Committee.

Definitions

The Committee went over the definitions as outlined in the University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire's Mission Statement, and the vision and value statements from a couple of institutions of higher education to provide a context for their discussion. Feedback indicated that while a definition of SUNY Cortland's mission can be found in two to three sentences within the mission statement, the statement itself is too long and needs to be reduced to two or three sentences. It was also noted that the mission statement contains the vision statement and the value sets, items which should have separate headings. The consensus was to improve, not change, the mission statement so that the messaging is concise.

Homework Assignment/Action Items

1. In the next two weeks, find one good example of a strategic plan that includes a mission statement, a vision statement, core values, and strategic priorities.
2. Based on your plan above and looking at the current mission statement in the catalog, think about how you would rewrite SUNY Cortland's mission statement.

Adjournment/Future Meetings

The meeting was adjourned at 9:39 a.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, December 4 at 8:30 a.m. Regular meetings will take place every Thursday until April 2009

Submitted by:
Eunice Miller