

Cabinet for Institutional Change
Focus Area Updates
October 2009

Focus Area: Vision

We have reviewed documents and gathered information from staff, faculty, students and administrators to determine efforts now being made to advance HSU's vision and to assess its role in planning and budgeting. We have been particularly concerned with the impact of massive budget cuts and have sought more detailed explanation regarding how the vision is addressed as these reductions occur. Based on suggestions in an open forum and in numerous other meetings and conversations, we have requested and received other reports from campus administrators.

Currently we are drafting a set of recommendations to support some programs that directly address the vision and to more explicitly incorporate the vision in planning and budgeting. We firmly believe that a shared vision must guide the University, perhaps especially during dire budgetary times. Progress can be made using the existing vision statement. Yet we are increasingly aware of the ambiguities and the resulting frustrations of using this statement as a strategic guide. In the near future, we believe that leadership will be needed to refine this vision statement in order to strengthen its role as a compass for the campus community.

Focus Area: Collegiality

Collegiality (or lack thereof) is a very tricky area: You can't make people get along. But we feel that we can provide more opportunities for our campus to come together as a community and increase opportunities for informal interaction among students, staff, faculty, and administrators. We note that some of the times when we interact most successfully are those such as the fall welcome barbecue. We believe that increasing the number of such opportunities could be very valuable. One of the most popular suggestions we received was a free-Friday period – perhaps noon to 2:00 p.m. – in which no classes or committee meetings would be scheduled. That time would be filled with community activities such as public lectures, concerts, all-campus meetings, social events, etc. Another very popular suggestion was the need for a faculty or employee club: a place on campus where faculty, staff, and administrators could interact informally. These are two of the many suggestions related to collegiality that we think may be worth pursuing. Cabinet members will continue to review and prioritize suggestions from the campus community for fostering collegiality across the campus and will forward our recommendations with implementation plans to university governance groups by March 2010.

Focus Area: Student Success

We met with stakeholders across the campus and cataloged current efforts regarding the seven student learning outcomes and inclusive academic excellence. Upon review of campus

community recommendations, the cabinet has identified the need for a campuswide Enrollment Management Task Force. A recommendation for membership of the Task Force and for developing recruitment and retention plans has been vetted with the university's department chairs, college deans, Academic Senate, Staff Council, Associated Students and Vice Presidents. The Enrollment Management Task Force will be appointed October 2009 and will draft the enrollment plans and, following campuswide review, these plans will be adopted and implemented by spring 2010.

Focus Area: Culture of Evidence

We met with groups and individuals to develop a plan for an Office of Institutional Research on campus, and presented it to the Executive Committee (see document "Proposal to Establish an Office of Institutional Research and Planning"). The goal is to work toward an Office of Institutional Research that can provide information for decision-making, planning and budget issues, and perhaps to aid in assessment. Currently, the university is conducting a national search for a director. An effective Office of Institutional Research is a necessary ingredient for a culture of evidence, and is also arguably the first and simplest of several important steps toward that culture of evidence. We feel it is important that the campus change its habits, and use evidence in making decisions, assess our accomplishments, and modify our practices so we can continuously improve.

Focus Area: Governance

The Governance focus team goals for spring were to gather critiques, comments and suggestions from across campus to assess two main areas: shared governance and committees. This semester, we are bringing cross-governance representatives together to charge them with working together to make these changes that will focus on:

- Clarifying governance roles and limits of purview (both interest and control) within groups and between groups.
- Drastically reducing the number of committees and clarifying a clear charge of action with the ones that remain.
- Avoiding the failure to execute campus strategies and goals.

It is important for the campus to know that our team is *not* going to decide what detailed path to follow. Instead, we are collecting information, both through meetings and surveys (see below) regarding why the governance structure is 'broken' and what might be proposed to fix it. In all of our discussions, we note a deep commitment and genuine passion for making HSU a better place. Our discussions have also made it clear to us that our Governance structure is not effective and must be changed (as WASC and Keeling noted as well).

We are posting several related documents on this website for you to read, if you have some time and the interest to peruse them. We are also reviewing good models for governance, and would appreciate

any feedback you might have on that front. Please feel free to voice your opinion on this website in an open manner; dialogue is the key for the success of this process.

Once again, all of us on the Cabinet thank you for sharing your ideas, providing perspective and engaging in discussions. Your willingness to participate demonstrates the widespread and sincere desire on campus to change in a positive way and make Humboldt State University stronger.