April 28, 2017

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students:

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time and energy to participate in our strategic planning activities so far this year. We write to provide another update on the process and to invite you to the next set of conversation sessions (open forums) to share your thoughts on the emerging planning themes and priorities for the college.

First, the results of the surveys are in! Our consultants at Keeling & Associates (K&A) have prepared a comprehensive summary of findings, which is now available for your review. The report is extensive, more than 140 pages in length, detailing overall responses as well as by distinct constituent groups (faculty, administrators and staff, students, alumni, parents, Regents, and faculty emeriti). It includes an executive summary that highlights key findings, including areas of difference or emphasis compared to the findings from K&A’s in-person interviews and forums. Thank you again to each of you who took the time to participate in the survey. The report is uploaded to the strategic planning website and may be viewed here.

Since our last update, the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) has been meeting regularly to discuss potential “big ideas” and strategies, informed by the sum of the findings from the information-gathering activities. K&A has participated in these discussions and prepared a summary of planning themes to reflect the ideas that have emerged. Please note the summary is a working document that continues to evolve with each SPC discussion. We invite you to review that summary here.

After Commencement, on May 24-25, 2017, the SPC and Cabinet will meet for a two-day strategic planning retreat, during which we will seek to reach consensus on draft goals and objectives for the new plan. Your feedback over the next several weeks will be immensely valuable to us as we seek to identify goals and objectives that are both aspirational yet feasible, and to be attentive to the concerns and priorities identified by members of our campus community. So, we’ve scheduled another round of open forums, and we hope you will join us at one of these times—to help us prioritize some of the ideas we have discussed, as well as to comment on things we still need to address. You’ll see that two of these forums are planned for next week—before preparation for finals begins—and two immediately after finals week ends. (We wish you success with the finals and end-of-semester flurry in between!)

Open Forum Sessions:

Tuesday, May 2, 4:15-5:15 pm, Mott Room, Dahl Centennial Union
Thursday, May 4, 9:40-10:50 am, Hovde Lounge, Preus Library
Friday, May 19, 10:00-11:00 am, Mott Room, Dahl Centennial Union
Friday, May 19, 2:00-3:00 pm, Mott Room, Dahl Centennial Union
Over the summer, K&A will assist us in drafting the goals and objectives for the strategic plan. At the beginning of the fall semester, we will convene another round of open forums for the purposes of gathering your feedback on that draft. We hope you will continue to take advantage of these and other opportunities to contribute to the process.

In the meantime, please know that all of us on the SPC remain available for feedback and consultation. Contact the co-chairs or members of the SPC at any time, and please visit the strategic planning website for additional information and updates.

Sincerely,

Brad Chamberlain and Terry Sparkes
Co-Chairs, Strategic Planning Committee