November 15, 2016  (by email)

To: Luther Faculty, Staff, and Students
From: Brad Chamberlain and Terry Sparkes, Strategic Planning Committee co-chairs

On behalf of the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), we write to update you on where we are with the strategic planning process and to let you know about important opportunities to participate during the year ahead.

Since being appointed and charged by President Carlson last month, the SPC has met twice with our consultants at Keeling & Associates (K&A) to talk about how best to engage everyone in our strategic planning effort. In order to be successful, the planning process will require your ideas and your participation, as we seek to develop a comprehensive plan that reflects our shared priorities and aspirations for Luther College. We are currently engaged in scheduling a number of opportunities for you to share your ideas, beginning this month and continuing through the academic year.

To help you in planning your own participation, here is a brief summary of upcoming events and conversations:

- In the next few weeks, SPC members will begin to utilize existing meetings with fellow faculty, staff, and students (such as standing committees and organizations) to invite conversation, listen to your ideas, and begin to discuss potential areas of priority for the new strategic plan.

- Four team members from K&A will be on campus on December 5-7, 2016, during which they will facilitate open forums with faculty, staff, and students; lead an “idea wall” exercise—a public activity through which passersby can write comments and suggestions for the new plan; and conduct interviews with small groups of campus constituents, as identified by the SPC.

- If you are unable to participate in activities on December 5-7, please be assured that there will be more opportunities to contribute your thoughts and ideas to the planning process, including additional conversations with members of the SPC, an additional campus visit by K&A in early to mid-February to continue gathering ideas about our priorities for Luther, a confidential online survey during February, and another round of campus conversations in April to begin to sift through ideas and move toward drafting the strategic plan.

- In late spring and summer 2017, the SPC will use the ideas gathered during this academic year from the campus community and from alumni/ae, parents, and the wider community, to create
a draft of the strategic plan itself. As we gather to open the next academic year, in late August and early September, we will make this draft available to everyone, provide multiple opportunities for feedback, and then incorporate that feedback into a final draft to be presented to the Board of Regents in late October. If that draft is approved, it will be the basis for creating a second piece of the strategic plan—the action/implementation plan that details activities, steps, and accountability—for presentation and approval at the February 2018 Board of Regents meeting.

- Two things we want to make clear: 1) the SPC, in consultation with President Carlson, senior leadership, and the Board, is responsible for writing Luther’s plan; our ability to ensure that it reflects our hopes and aspirations as a community will depend on everyone’s participation; and 2) the “draft” we present to the Regents in October 2017 will become “the strategic priorities” driving the implementation plan. When both of these pieces—priorities and implementation plan—are approved, in February 2018, we will have a robust roadmap for the college going forward.

We have created a website for the strategic planning process, which lists the membership and charge of the SPC, describes the process and timeline, and will house meeting agendas, summaries, and other documents. We encourage you to visit the website regularly and to offer your feedback on the planning process, either through the website or by contacting a member of the SPC.

Thank you in advance for your participation as we work together to identify the next set of goals and aspirations for the future of Luther College.

Brad Chamberlain and Terry Sparkes
SPC co-chairs