

Date: June 21, 2011

To: Steering Committee

From: Mort Winston, Carol Bresnahan, co-chairs
Committee on Planning and Priorities

Re: Report of activities for AY 2010-2011

The Committee on Planning and Priorities has had a productive academic year. CPP members this year included co-chairs Carol Bresnahan (Provost) and Morton Winston (Philosophy), Cynthia Curtis (President of the Faculty Senate), Roman Kovalev (History), John Marcy (Office of Advancement), Kate Miklosz (Office of Admissions), Brian Potter (Political Science and International Studies), David Prenskey (Marketing, Management and International Business) Barbara Wineberg (Treasurer), Michael Robertson (English), Nino Scarpati (President of Staff Senate), Arielle Simonis (Student Government), Olaniyi Solebo (President of Student Government), Nadine Stern (Vice President for Information Technology) and Truc-Lan Vu (Graduate Student Representative). John Marcy was replaced on the committee by Matthew Golden, and Barbara Wineberg was replaced by Lloyd Ricketts. Jim Norcross (Vice President for Student Affairs) was included on the CPP mailing list and attended several meetings.

CPP's activities focused on three major topics: 1) revision of the Governance Structure and Processes, 2) responding to the charge from President Gitenstein (conveyed through steering) to prepare a Monitoring Report as requested by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and 3) developing a recommendation regarding the creation of an updated institutional strategic plan for the College in 2011-2012. In addition to these major issues, CPP also considered and approved an interim set of prioritization principles for Facilities, and launched a strategic planning website.

1) Revision of sections 7 and 8 of "Governance Structure and Processes."

CPP recommended significantly changing the College's planning structure. Section 7 outlines the membership and roles of different actors in planning. On a rotating basis, CPP will review the plans of the eight Schools (treating the Library as a School) and nine Planning Councils. To insure that the Planning Councils remain active, each is co-chaired by a planning officer and an elected faculty or staff member in the case of Educational Affairs, Faculty Development, and Student Affairs. CPP's revisions of the campus planning bodies create planning processes that are clearly communicated and broadly participatory.

CPP revised section 8 of "Governance Structures and Processes" to create a standardized, four-step process for planning that allows public input at various stages of planning. A standardized form of public input improves the quality of plans and improves public buy-in of planning. CPP presented these recommendations at an open forum on April 20, 2011. The Committee made some modifications reflecting public comment and recommended that the President adopt the changes. The completed document will go to the Board of Trustees at its July 12, 2011, meeting for approval.

2) Response to Middle States' requirement for a monitoring report

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education announced in a letter to President Gitenstein on November 19, 2010 that it will be requesting a monitoring report “documenting (1) implementation of a comprehensive institutional strategic plan that links long-range planning to decision-making and budgeting process and (2) planning processes that are clearly communicated, provide for constituent participation, and incorporate the use of assessment results (Standard 2).” The monitoring report is due September 1, 2011. President Gitenstein formally requested that CPP create the report by the deadline.

CPP has responded in three ways. First, CPP, and other on campus, met with Dr. Mary Ellen Petrisko of the Middle States Commission on January 22 to better assess what sort of documentation Middle States is requesting. Second, CPP has discussed several ways of improving the planning process, to meet Middle States expectations and to better serve the College. Of particular importance is Treasurer Ricketts' “Linking Budget Planning and Strategic Resource Allocation” document. CPP has created a draft version of the monitoring report and is currently working on revising it in the hope that a complete fair draft can be completed by June 30, 2011.

3) CPP Recommendation on Institutional Strategic Planning in 2011-2012

CPP held its annual strategic planning retreat on June 1, 2011. President Gitenstein began the meeting with a presentation on the current context for strategic finance. Across the country, institutions of higher education have seen a growing mismatch of revenues and expenses. General public opinion shows dissatisfaction with the sector's rising costs, although recent graduates perceive a higher value of the personal growth earned through college.

Following the president's talk, CPP prepared a partial agenda the June 15 Presidents Advisory Council retreat by recommending that the President's major strategic initiative for AY 2011-12 be the crafting and approval of an Updated Institutional Strategic Plan (UISP). CPP unanimously approved the following recommendations to the President:

- a) CPP assumes responsibility and oversight for the process of developing an Updated Institutional Strategic Plan (UISP).
- b) CPP will recommend to the President a faculty member and an administrator to co-ordinate a working group to complete the drafting and adoption of a UISP.
- c) CPP recommends that the scope of the UISP process be comprehensive, including a reaffirmation of the mission and core beliefs.
- d) CPP recommends that the development of a UISP be the strategic priority for the College for academic year 2011-12.

4) CPP Transition Plan

CPP met on the afternoon of June 15th after the PAC retreat. The PAC retreat affirmed CPP's basic recommendations concerning the development of a UISP, and refined the planning proposal by making several additional recommendations concerning the nature and composition of the strategic planning taskforce, the use of an external consultant, and faculty and administrative leadership for the project. The incoming interim provost, Susan Bakewell-Sachs, as well as two student representatives attended this meeting. Several names of possible faculty members and administrators who might lead the UISP project next year were placed in nomination. Thanks were expressed to the out-going co-chairs of the committee, Mort Winston and Carol Bresnahan, and to Michael Robertson who is also rotating off of CPP.