

STRATEGIC PLANING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF 11-12-14

Introduction of new member of the council – Bob Kostick. Graphic design faculty, former chair of the department, and director of the Honors Program. Bob’s participation in the Strategic Planning Council comes from his interest in breaking concepts down, re-envisioning their various elements, and reassembling them in new and more meaningful ways. He sees a connection to this process and the work of strategic planning.

Reintroduction of members of the Strategic Planning Council.

Discussion of agenda items.

Discussion of use of Basecamp project management system.

Paul gave an update to Cabinet and how the Council plans to move forward. He particularly liked the many descriptions of how members of the Council came to strategic planning.

INTRODUCTION OF KEELING ASSOCIATES

Kyle – Chief of Staff and VP. Started with Keeling in 2001 and came from college health services. Worked in Colorado for many years. Serves as Director of Project Management for Keeling and serves on many other project teams. Responsible for facilitating interviews and sharing information back to the Strategic Planning Council.

Will – One year with Keeling Associates. Works with Kyle on day-to-day assignments. He serves as first point of contact with the executive group. Won’t be at the first campus visit but will attend other visits by Keeling.

Brock – Joined Keeling Associates last spring as Director of Project Analysis. Taught history in Arkansas. Primary responsibilities include interviews and data collection.

Rich – Principal at Keeling Associates. Background as a physician – trained at Tufts. Taught at University of Virginia. Served 13 years as academic faculty member followed by administrative role in student affairs and curriculum. Also worked at University of Wisconsin. Started Keeling Associates 15 years ago with 13-14 years in higher education consulting. Focus of work is to create positive change for learning – try to help institutions do things that will improve outcomes for students. Completed around 100 projects in strategic planning – also strong experience in program review. Examples include Amherst and NYU.

Additional staff:

Jennifer Dickson – Director of Research. Focused on qualitative research including surveys and analysis.

Gordon Winsor – Executive Director of Search Projects – focused on quantitative analysis of survey responses.

Joey Desanto Jones – Director of Communications - specialty is meetings. Serves on the project team at Hampshire College.

BEST PRACTICES

Success features for strategic planning – making a plan that works, accomplishes goals for the institution, and is implementable and aspirational. Ten characteristics:

1. Balance of both implementable and aspirational. Broad input from campus. Participation. Easy way for people to share information. Balance of high level awareness of campus leadership and on-the-ground experience of faculty and staff. Two are rarely in conflict. Process enables discussion and resolution of differences.
2. Strategic Planning is not aspirational only – must also be connected to practical implementation plan that includes costs.
3. Context has to be considered from the beginning. Academic context will influence what institution wants to accomplish. What does it mean to be a public liberal arts college in New Hampshire? What are similar institutions doing? Consider threats and opportunities.
4. Clear sense of being strategic rather than tactical, truly strategic goals. Formulation of goals and objectives.
5. Priority setting – three hardest things are to make sure that the plan is practical; plan is strategic in focus; and to set priorities. Emphasize some things over others. Look at what could be done and what can no longer be done. Based on limitation of resources. What are you going to stop doing?
6. Clear beginning, middle, and end to project. Keep endpoint in mind. For planning process – keep deadlines with implementable plan.
7. Open and transparent process. Nothing is secret: surveys, meetings, conversations are documented and are made available.
8. Strategic Planning Council is important to the process. Campus conversations that members will have with others – bring knowledge from these conversations back to the Council.
9. Information sharing through documentation and conversations.
10. Meetings – departmental meetings or scheduled meetings – members of the Council can use these situations to gather and share information.

COMMON ISSUES IN STRATEGIC PLANNING

Skepticism of process – previous experiences were not successful

Fear of outcomes – fear that nothing will change or fear that there will be too much change

The process of strategic planning is the solution to these issues

TIMELINE

Feasibility of the timeline depends on us and the availability of members of the Council and KSC community. Slippage is often the problem of things that are out of our control. Careful planning is necessary.

PREPARATION FOR RETREAT

Keeling and associates will be on campus December 3 and 4 for meetings with various groups. Key first question: what are the important things to pay attention to during the strategic planning process? What should KSC aim for? What is our distinction among public liberal arts colleges and other colleges in New Hampshire? What needs to be on the table to discuss?

Retreat on December 5: priority of retreat is to share initial perspective after review of information.

FIRST STEPS

Members of the Strategic Planning Council should talk to others about development of plan.

Opportunities for two-way conversations

Survey data results shared

Planning retreat

Objective at end of planning retreat in spring – no one is surprised by outcomes

Remember roles of the Strategic Planning Council – citizens of the College – advancing the goals of the College is the primary objective

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COUNCIL FOR KEELING AND ASSOCIATES

Regarding context and enrollment, demographics, comparisons with other institutions – what kind of information would we get? From whom? And when?

Keeling : Keeling will think of the College in relation to functions of other institutions and of the liberal arts focus. What Keeling will be able to find out about other liberal arts institutions – will share that information set, enrollment projections, context of liberal arts and other institutions by December 5 retreat.

Also regarding context – the political context – will Keeling consider that there is a different state legislature every four years?

Keeling: To the extent that things are predictable – part of the context is how are liberal arts and institutions seen by legislators? Will provide as much as they can get on how is NH similar to other states. Value of liberal arts education is always in question. Reduction of funding levels. Example of Virginia in progressive decline in funding.

Possibility of campaign outreach letter now and in early December around asking colleagues what should be on the table to set the tone for participatory process.

Keeling: Great idea. Some conversations to happen before they get to campus.

What would you like to bring to the Council's attention? Take notes on discussions. Look for trends and themes.

REACTIONS TO CALL WITH KEELING ASSOCIATES

Seem organized and experienced

Pleased with their higher education experience – private sector is different – good understanding and background

Knowledge of Keeling Associates from previous professional experience – good reputation

Future of the College – how does it make its living in the community it is in? Where does host community fit in? Bringing students from the outside and who leave the community after a period of time

DISCUSSION POINTS

- More internships? Experiential learning. How to grow opportunities? Discussions with business in the area.
- Liability concerns have not been addressed – internships not recommended. Faculty are not indemnified if something goes wrong. Liability issues for all internships by topic.
- Timeline is too compressed - fall semester is nearly over – needs to be addressed
- Top administrators are not on the Strategic Planning Council – they should be represented here
- How do decisions get made? Hard to move forward if administrators are not represented. How are they participating?
- President didn't want Cabinet to be leading the process
- Context – what are we placing in context? How side do we build out context? Not thinking in a vacuum. What are we going to stop doing? To place in historical context – liberal arts colleges in relation to New Hampshire, New England, national? What is fundamental to liberal arts education? Looking 5, 10, 15 years out what will the landscape look like?
- President met with union – other processes hijacked by senior officials at other institutions
- Leadership understands compressed timeframe and shares concerns
- Have to have a goal
- Members of the Strategic Planning Council should start having conversations with people in their area
- Start talking to groups that we are a part of – ask the same questions
- Pru and Paul will develop questions that members of the Strategic Planning Council can start to share with members of the community in their areas and will have available on Thursday, November 13, 2014.
- Strategic Planning Council members should start going to scheduled meetings and asking these questions, and take notes – not as a dialog – just bring the concerns back to the Council
- How will members of the Council answer questions on skepticism with process and the outcomes such as nothing is going to change or there will not be the desired change?
- Be genuine – ask questions – believe in the process
- Know the context of the conversation
- Take questions back to staff
- This is one of the ways we have of getting the conversation out to the community

BASECAMP

For the time being – leave the email notification on for Basecamp postings

COMMUNICATION

The Council will talk more about communication at the next meeting