

Minutes
March 26, 2015

Present: R. Couch, K. Drake-Deese, P. Francis (Co-Chair), S. Goetsch, L. Launen, A. Miller, K. Sandy (Co-Chair), J. Sturtz, C. Turrentine, L. Ware, K. Williams

Guests: P. Cuper, P. Strifflino

Guests from Keeling & Associates: J. Dickson, W. Erlandson, K. Hutchison, R. Keeling

1. Background

Patty Francis and Kirsti Sandy, IPG co-chairs, welcomed the group to its first meeting and distributed President Huot's charge as well as the IPG membership list. Members introduced themselves and Patty welcomed the members of the Keeling & Associates team. There was some discussion of the charge, in particular the timetable, and the expectation that IPG would produce an action plan for the strategic goals and objectives, identified by the Strategic Planning Council (SPC), by the end of May. Patty stated that it is the president's intention to take the strategic plan – including the implementation plan – to the USNH Board of Trustees for review and approval in June. She also acknowledged the important and collegial role Keeling & Associate has played in facilitating the process to this point.

Pru Cuper and Paul Strifflino, co-chairs of the Strategic Planning Council (SPC), provided IPG members with a summary of the work SPC has engaged in since December, stressing the Strategic Planning retreat held March 25-26 at the College Camp. They described the meetings held by SPC, campus visits by our consultants, Keeling & Associates, and the numerous outreach activities conducted by SPC to help assure the planning process was participatory, inclusive, and communicated frequently and widely to the campus. According to Pru and Paul, the final retreat focused on developing a vision statement, identifying values that will underpin the plan, fine-tuning the strategic themes that had been identified, clarifying and reorganizing objectives, and prioritizing activities; this last item resulted in some actions being deleted from the extant plan.

Pru and Paul also provided IPG with insight into how IPG could meet President Huot's charge most effectively, emphasizing the importance of working closely with Keeling & Associates, soliciting input and feedback from the campus on a regular basis, and communicating frequently and well about the progress being made by the group. They also strongly encouraged IPG members to examine the Strategic Planning website, since it contains many useful resources and provides a very detailed account of how SPC worked and what it produced.

2. Keeling & Associates

Patty and Kirsti invited Rich Keeling to provide IPG with a summary of where the planning process is at this point and what needs to happen through the end of May. Rich explained that one of the last activities undertaken by SPC actually took place just before the IPG meeting,

when SPC members examined the ideas and suggestions from the retreat and developed draft goal statements for each of the four strategic themes. He told the group that these statements are in rough draft form, but by the end of the week of March 30, IPG would receive a final document including the vision statement, delineated values, strategic goals, and objectives. This document will be reviewed and approved by President Huot prior to IPG receiving it, and IPG will not make revisions to the work completed by SPC. Instead, IPG's task is to create action plans intended to ensure that SPC's objectives are achieved. Rich also told IPG that they could expect to receive that next week the final results of the campus-wide survey conducted by Keeling & Associates, and that these findings will likely inform their work.

Rich then provided a brief summary of the four planning themes: 1) Identity/Distinction; 2) Student Achievement; 3) Institutional Sustainability; and 4) Community and Environmental Stewardship. There was considerable discussion at that point as to how IPG might best approach its task, with members noting that it was difficult to totally understand what was expected without a clear sense of the objectives that would be included under each theme. Rich offered to provide to IPG some examples of implementation plan templates so that the group could see what they would ultimately produce. Rich provided IPG with some advice as to how to proceed, cautioning members to "not be shy" in what they proposed as action items toward the objectives, and to include some activities that can be achieved early in the process and therefore instill confidence across campus in the planning process. He also reminded IPG that they are developing a five-year plan, and that not everything has to happen immediately. Finally, he said that he and his team would be monitoring the process and providing assistance as needed, a point that Paul and Pru reinforced based on their work with SPC.

3. Next Steps

The rest of the meeting focused on how to best move forward. Cathy Turrentine offered to identify campus data sources and reports that are relevant to the four planning themes, since these will be useful as IPG develops assessment measures and indicators for the action plans. Based on advice from Rich, members also agreed that it would make sense to divide into four sub-groups, with each focusing on one of the planning themes. This will help us make progress more quickly. It will be important throughout, however, to make sure work by the sub-groups is available for review by other IPG members, so we will continue to use Basecamp for this purpose; Kathleen Williams will make sure that all IPG members have access to Basecamp.

Kirsti and Patty said they would find a meeting time for the week of March 30. That meeting will focus primarily on the process sub-groups will use in doing their work and developing their action plans. A more detailed timeline will also be presented at that meeting so that the group is clear on the steps it needs to take at different points in time in order to meet the president's charge.