

CAS STRATEGIC PLANNING

Leading the Way

Final report of the College of Arts and Sciences
Strategic Planning Committee

Study Dates, September 1, 2010 through February 15, 2011

CAS STRATEGIC PLANNING

FINAL REPORT

The College of Arts and Sciences Strategic Planning Committee was formed by Dean Watson in September 2010, with representation by faculty and staff from across the college.

In his charge to the committee, Dean Watson framed the context for its work: the current CAS strategic plan (October 2009), put together by then Dean Apple and his staff, had been developed as a rapid response to the publication of the University's Path to Prominence™ and was intended primarily as a document to frame development goals for the college. Building from this foundation, Dean Watson sought to stage a strategic planning process informed by broad and inclusive input from across the college but set in the context of both the college and University's strategic plans. Accordingly, he charged the committee with:

- consulting as widely as possible across the college
- gathering whatever additional information seemed essential
- developing a “blue sky” vision for the college
- formulating that vision in a concise conceptual document focused on a short list of top priorities

The timeline envisaged for the process was compact and included three major phases:

- the committee's gathering information and formulating it into a visioning document – to be presented to Dean Watson by February 15, 2011
- a period of consultation about the document between the Dean and key college constituencies, in particular the department chairs and directors, between February 15 and March 15, 2011
- following this consultation, the formulation of a final plan by the Dean and his staff, this plan to include specific goals, timelines and metrics and to be completed by April 15, 2011

WHAT WE WERE ABLE TO DO

Given this charge and process, the committee began by defining how it would proceed and organize its work. It became evident that, in the time available, its focus would necessarily be primarily internal and that there would be limited focus upon external comparisons. Accordingly, the committee decided that it would gather information in four ways: through a series of focus groups with a wide range of constituencies; through an online survey of college faculty and staff; through presentations from a number of administrators and faculty directors; and through collecting institutional research data specifically relevant to the college. It also decided to create an anonymous email to allow for the confidential submission of comments.

To prepare for the focus groups and survey, the committee developed a series of core questions, which the co-chairs then tested with a pilot focus group. The questions were subsequently refined, and the members of the committee went on to hold a series of 21 focus group meetings between mid-October and mid-December 2010 (listed in Appendix B). Simultaneously, the online survey was launched. In response to these initiatives, approximately 250 faculty, staff and students attended the focus groups, 137 members of the college completed the survey (see Appendix C) and 3 individuals sent messages to the anonymous email. The committee was very grateful to members of the college community who responded to its invitations to contribute their thoughts and ideas; overall, it felt that it had heard from a large and representative proportion of current students, staff and faculty.

In December 2010, the committee held a first retreat to consider all the input it had received and begin formulating the material into a series of strategic issues and action items. During the winter break, members of the committee worked in teams to draft a vision statement and sections of the final report on each of the three core strategic issues that had emerged, and the committee met again twice in late January 2011 to review and discuss the drafts. Each team then revised its section in light of the group's discussion. Finally, the co-chairs and Interim Deputy Dean Ardis merged the individual sections into this report, adding a preamble and the appendices at the end of the document, including a list of issues that, while not necessarily strategic in nature, are nonetheless mission critical (see Appendix A). After the committee provided feedback on the draft, the final document was presented to Dean Watson on February 15, 2011.

WHAT WE WERE NOT ABLE TO DO

During the planning process, the committee became aware of specific factors that shaped the scope of its work and, both to ensure better understanding of what this document is and is not and to suggest ways in which future planning can be improved, we describe those factors here:

- the short timeline within which the committee worked provided focus and helped us avoid the “planning fatigue” to which these processes often succumb
- that timeline also prevented us from consulting with constituencies more than once, however, and from taking ideas and drafts back to constituencies before finalizing them
- while the committee sought input from staff and students, its information and priorities came primarily from faculty constituencies and prioritizes the concerns of the college's faculty
- data concerning many strategic indicators at UD was either unavailable or difficult to obtain, inhibiting the committee's ability to discern current situations and longitudinal trends
- data relating to outcomes was not a part of the committee's discussion, leading to a document focused upon inputs and one that could not include recommended measures for output goals
- the dearth of internal data and the short timeline inhibited by meaningful comparison of UD with its benchmark and aspirational institutions

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING

The college should, in collaboration with the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness (when appointed), work to create a data-rich environment for an ongoing CAS strategic planning process that is both iterative and evidence-based. Such an environment should include the development of a set of core data items

addressing key strategic indicators and will require an appropriate support and personnel structure to collect and analyze these data and facilitate their use in strategic budgeting at both the unit level and for the college as a whole.

These data should be publicized through the creation of a CAS Fact Book and used routinely in planning, publicity and development activities. As learning outcomes data are further developed by the academic programs, these should be incorporated into the strategic planning process as well. Appendix D lists the data we collected. This list may serve as a starting point for a broader college institutional research initiative.

MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Iain Crawford (English) and John A. Pelesko (Mathematical Sciences), Co-chairs

Jackie Aldridge (NUCLEUS program)

Anne Boylan (History)

Suzanne Burton (Music)

Julio Carrión (Political Science and International Relations and Director of Area Studies)

Jianguo Chen (Foreign Languages and Literatures and Director of the Confucius Institute)

Kirk Czymmek (Biological Sciences)

Mónica Domínguez Torres (Art History and Latin American Studies)

John Koh (Chemistry and Biochemistry)

René Marquez (Art)

Karen Rosenberg (Anthropology and Interim Director, Associate of Arts Program)

Doug Tobias (History)

Leland Ware (Public Policy and Public Administration)

CathyWu (Computer and Information Sciences and Biology, and Director, Center for Bioinformatics and Computational Biology)

Interim Deputy Dean Ann Ardis acted as liaison between the committee and the Dean's office, while staff support was provided by Marsha Rybicki.

VISION STATEMENT

The College of Arts and Sciences, the oldest and largest college at the University of Delaware, prepares students to be successful, thoughtful, responsible and engaged citizens through broad and balanced undergraduate, graduate and professional educations. The college is the intellectual heart of the University. Its faculty and staff are dedicated artists, performers, writers, educators, scholars, scientists and professionals who teach, mentor and advise, while also producing broad-ranging, world-class scholarship and cultural knowledge that benefit students and society at large. We seek to train the next generation of scholars, teachers and skilled professionals to be intellectually curious, well-informed and productive members of the work force and public-spirited citizens. In doing so, we affirm the importance to our undertaking of creativity, innovation, and critical thinking and expression achieved through active scholarship and teaching.

Our values shape our vision of the college's future. Foremost is a commitment to both the tradition of liberal arts education and the cultivation of new and emerging fields of knowledge and artistic expression. Integrating teaching and research, facilitating interdisciplinary undertakings, promoting productive collaborative efforts, and fostering a global perspective and experience are essential to that dual commitment. So, too, are recruiting and supporting a talented and diverse population of students, faculty and staff, and enhancing the vitality of the college's intellectual life through on-going engagement with varied ideas, people and places. We seek to recruit and retain talented faculty and staff members, improve the college's advising and mentoring practices, and continue its long history of involvement with the community at large.

To realize these commitments, we will provide the necessary resources and infrastructure to significantly raise our undergraduate and graduate programs in key rankings. Through the use of strategic "cluster hiring," we will enhance existing or create new programs in targeted areas to accelerate our visibility and prominence nationally and internationally. We will optimize the advantages of our inherent disciplinary diversity as we both lend support to and lead University-wide collaborations in teaching, research and grant funding. We will advance our existing position as a national model for training secondary teachers, and we will lead our peers in the quality of student writing and advisement. Through these efforts, we will continue to attract exceptional students to the University and ensure their success while also strengthening our support networks for *all* students.

STRATEGIC GOAL: THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, UD'S CORE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITY

As the intellectual heart of the University of Delaware, the College of Arts and Sciences will build on its numerous existing interdisciplinary strengths and position itself as the institutional core for interdisciplinary activity at the University.

While disciplines provide the foundational structure for the bodies of knowledge in which faculty are trained and socialized, there is a growing recognition that solutions to many difficult and important problems require an interdisciplinary approach. With its wide range of academic specialties and its experience with interdisciplinary programs, centers and institutes, the College of Arts and Sciences is uniquely positioned to enhance and enrich interdisciplinary activity at the University. Interdisciplinary activities promise not only to strengthen the college's existing departments and disciplines but also to provide the exposure and training essential to a 21st century liberal arts education and necessary for the workplace. In addition, and especially considering the increasingly interdisciplinary focus of federal funding, interdisciplinary activities offer the potential to obtain increased levels of external funding and thereby support ongoing research and curricular development. Finally, efforts to promote interdisciplinary activity will enrich the college's identity and enhance its visibility within and beyond the University.

To achieve these goals and fulfill the promise of interdisciplinary activity, the college must engage the institutional challenges inevitably associated with such innovations. Many of these challenges arise as a result of the natural tensions between the priorities of individual units and the investment of resources in strategic collaborative opportunities. In forging ahead, we must strive to balance these competing priorities, maintaining disciplinary integrity while providing the infrastructures necessary for interdisciplinary activity to thrive. Beyond simple financial support, more complex issues must also be addressed, including academic and administrative structure, faculty workload and evaluation, and inter-unit communication. Similarly, the structures supporting interdisciplinary activity beyond the college and the University must all be reviewed and adapted to better support these new efforts. The following recommended action items represent the first steps along the path to this strategic goal.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #1 – BUILD ON EXISTING AND DEVELOPING INTERDISCIPLINARY CENTERS, INSTITUTES AND PROGRAMS IN ORDER TO BROADEN PARTICIPATION AND FOSTER NEW COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES.

The College of Arts and Sciences houses a wide range of interdisciplinary centers, institutes and programs. As a group, these units have the potential to form the core of growing interdisciplinary activity in and beyond the college. Strategic investments should be made in those units that demonstrate the potential to broaden participation, continually spark new collaborations, garner external support, and communicate their importance to the college, the University and the community at large. In particular, cluster hiring in thriving interdisciplinary programs will not only strengthen curricular offerings but also foster new collaborative research opportunities. Such efforts must be made in conjunction with careful and objective evaluation of program strengths across the arts, humanities, natural and social sciences.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #2 – INVEST IN SUPPORT STRUCTURES FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION.

A number of faculty and students are keenly interested in collaborating with other units, but lack the logistic and financial support to make such collaborations a reality. As a result, substantial talent currently existing within the college goes unrecognized and underutilized. The college should facilitate regular encounters to bring together faculty from diverse disciplines and prompt new collaborative relationships. It should also make available appropriate levels of staff support, space and technical resources, and it should establish a permanent, self-sustaining, flexible pool of “venture capital” to catalyze and incentivize high risk/high reward interdisciplinary teams.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #3 – PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUSTAINED SUPPORT FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND TEAM-TEACHING.

Collaborative research projects and team-taught courses enhance the profile of the college and offer exceptional learning opportunities for both students and faculty. However, these initiatives have also faced a number of obstacles in relation to workload policies, curricular integration and sustainability over the years. The college should therefore encourage faculty involvement in such programs by minimizing barriers to collaboration through devising new guidelines for faculty workload, performance evaluation and P&T policies that reward shared teaching and collaborative research. Professional staff at the college should also work with departments toward the integration of team-taught courses into graduate and undergraduate curricula.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #4 - SHOWCASE INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES WITHIN AND BEYOND THE COLLEGE.

In order to give visibility to its interdisciplinary efforts, the college should convene themed conferences, interdisciplinary symposia or other public events that include participants from the Arts, Humanities, Natural and Social Sciences, and that result in publications. The college should develop a communications and marketing plan which includes an online infrastructure to promote interdisciplinary projects; web pages containing details about current collaborations, grant opportunities and online forums, for example, will not only showcase the college’s interdisciplinary initiatives but also facilitate collaboration among different units across the University and promote the development of regional, national and international partnerships.

STRATEGIC GOAL: THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, ALWAYS A LEADER IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Proud of its long tradition of excellence in undergraduate education, the College of Arts and Sciences will renew its commitment to this traditional strength, work to make enhancements in key areas, and strive to align efforts in undergraduate education with new initiatives in graduate education and interdisciplinary activity.

The University of Delaware has traditionally excelled at undergraduate education. Faculty commitment to teaching undergraduate students, institutional support for undergraduate research, initiatives to improve the first-year experience, discovery learning opportunities, a vibrant honors program, and the predominance of

small classes are but some of the hallmarks of this excellence. For the College of Arts and Sciences, the strategic challenge is therefore to sustain this commitment to undergraduate education even as it works to strengthen other areas of its mission, such as graduate education and interdisciplinary teaching and research. Even though the college excels in undergraduate education, there are issues which require our attention. Five areas in particular emerged as the most urgent.

The first is the increasing importance of interdisciplinarity. The college faces the strategic task of finding ways to align more closely its growing emphasis on interdisciplinary research with its current programs and new initiatives in interdisciplinary teaching. The strategic challenge here is to strengthen and create interdisciplinary opportunities by providing faculty with institutional incentives to have greater involvement in them and by facilitating student access to and progress in such programs.

A second area identified for strategic attention is student advising. There is a strong consensus that both students who begin their programs on the main campus and those who transfer into the college from the Associate in Arts program or from other institutions need more effective advising than is currently the case. On the one hand, the work of Undergraduate Academic Services was widely praised; on the other, concerns were expressed about inconsistencies in the role of faculty in advising. While faculty mentoring of undergraduates is seen as widely successful, the nuts-and-bolts work of curricular guidance within the academic departments is frequently cited as deficient. To improve student retention and timely progress towards graduation, the college should develop a workable model for academic advising. Uncoupling faculty mentoring from curricular guidance may be the most appropriate way to address this challenge.

A third area of strategic focus emerges from the quality of student writing. There is strong consensus that students' writing does not develop and improve as it should over the course of their programs and that the college should establish new initiatives to improve student writing across the curriculum and throughout a student's course of study. The challenge will be to find ways to achieve this goal without overburdening faculty and the college-based writing center, which is used by the campus at large.

A fourth issue that confronts the college lies in the strategic task of sustaining its long tradition of engagement with and commitment to secondary education in the face of a variety of external challenges. New efforts, such as the Delaware Teachers' Institute of New Castle County, are already underway, but the college must continue to acknowledge, support and strengthen secondary education, not only maintaining but enhancing this defining characteristic of Arts and Sciences.

Fifth and final is the issue of the college's ability to harness innovation through technology as students come to the University as digital natives and as instructional technology continues to evolve. This issue is complicated by uncertainty over the University's engagement with distributed learning. The college should prepare to assist and encourage departments to use up-to-date instructional technology in support of innovative pedagogical practices, including the development of hybrid courses that support strategic inter-institutional partnerships nationally and internationally.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #1 – RESTRUCTURE DEPARTMENT-DRIVEN WORKLOAD ASSIGNMENTS TO ALLOW FOR AND ENCOURAGE INTERDISCIPLINARY AND TEAM TEACHING.

Maintaining our traditional strength in undergraduate programs mandates that we respond and adapt to the changing needs of students and broader trends in higher education. In light of the emergence and importance of interdisciplinary efforts, the college should rethink purely department-driven teaching workload assignments, revising workload and P&T documents, removing barriers to team teaching and encouraging

interdisciplinary teaching. Wherever possible, position descriptions for new hires should include the ability and desire to teach in interdisciplinary programs or in multiple disciplines. At the same time, administrative structures, based on a common, often interdisciplinary mission, rather than disciplinary divisions, should be created.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #2 – IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF STUDENT ADVISING, BUILDING ON MODEL PROGRAMS ALREADY IN PLACE WHILE REEXAMINING ALL ADVISING EFFORTS.

There is widespread recognition that advising across the college is uneven. While pockets of excellence, such as the NUCLEUS program, exist, in-department advising ranges from outstanding to mediocre. Recognizing that advising involves two distinct activities, student mentoring and curricular advising, the college should work with departments and faculty to develop a model that draws upon best practices in both areas. Careful attention should be paid to making the most effective use of faculty time, time perhaps better spent in mentoring rather than curricular advising. Since professional staff are often best equipped to handle curricular advising, consideration should be given to encouraging and extending their role.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #3 – IMPROVE WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM, UTILIZING AND EXPANDING EXISTING STRUCTURES WHILE INVESTIGATING NEW INITIATIVES.

Ensuring that all students graduate having the ability to write well is a cornerstone of our mission as an undergraduate institution. Acknowledging that this fails to happen with alarming frequency, the college should increase the size and scope of its writing center and pursue new initiatives that will create and support a more writing-intensive curriculum across the disciplines.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #4 – RETAIN AND EXPAND STRENGTHS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION.

With over 10% of our undergraduate majors enrolled in secondary education programs, sustaining and strengthening support for this area is a key component of the success of the college as a whole and to its visibility within the University community and the state. Of particular importance are improving students' training with 21st century instructional technologies and strengthening partnerships with schools by, for example, improving support for co-operating teachers and for teachers' own continuing education.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #5 – CAPITALIZE ON THE LATEST INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY, SEEKING TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE.

Technology has provided and continues to provide new opportunities to enhance and expand student learning. Online courses and hybrid models of instruction, merging traditional classrooms with an online component, are but two of the many examples of this that should be encouraged. Building on the promise of technology-laden curriculum-development initiatives such as the ISE Lab, the college should plan for the use and implementation of technology to support innovative pedagogical practice across the curriculum.

STRATEGIC GOAL: THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES, ADVANCING SCHOLARSHIP THROUGH GRADUATE EDUCATION

The University of Delaware's strategic plan articulates a vision of the University as a premier research and graduate institution. The College of Arts and Sciences will further strengthen its diverse and talented faculty as well as its outstanding programs and students to advance scholarship, broadly defined, through graduate education.

With departments ranging from Art to Sociology and from History to Biology, with over 500 faculty and over 900 graduate students, the College of Arts and Sciences is already home to a wide-ranging variety of scholarly and creative activity. The quality of this scholarship and creative activity positions the college as an institutional leader in efforts to actualize the vision of the University of Delaware as a premier research and graduate university. A coordinated effort to raise even further the level of scholarship and creative activity in the college and to increase the prominence of selected graduate programs promises to pay great dividends rapidly.

In some areas it is clear how best to direct efforts to enable us to reap the rewards of outstanding scholarship and graduate education. For example, the need to integrate and expand interdisciplinary activity presents an immediate challenge, while the need to affirm a commitment to the state of Delaware at the graduate level is also a priority for both the college and the University. However, a major challenge facing the college is the lack of an evidence-based understanding of the strengths and weakness of all its graduate programs. Such an understanding is essential to ensure the best use of the resources available for investment in graduate education.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #1 – INITIATE A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF ALL GRADUATE PROGRAMS HOUSED IN THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

The College of Arts and Sciences houses graduate and professional programs of widely varying size and scope and spanning over twenty different disciplines. While it is clear that this set of programs has the potential to both greatly enrich scholarship and creative activity in the college and position the college as a leader in graduate education, an in-depth review is needed in order to allow for coherent strategic decision-making. Led by the college administration, but including representatives from all graduate programs, the college should initiate such a study with the goal of deciding on the future allocation of resources. This study should be broad in scope and should include, but not be limited to, study of: academic excellence and program outcomes; graduate stipend levels at UD and at comparator institutions; program size relative to demand; faculty and graduate student workload; demographic diversity; and the infrastructure supporting graduate programs. The study should be completed within a short, well defined timeframe, with the outcome being a set of highly specific strategic recommendations regarding graduate study.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #2 – RESTRUCTURE DEPARTMENT-DRIVEN WORKLOAD ASSIGNMENTS TO ALLOW FOR AND ENCOURAGE BOTH INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND GRADUATE EDUCATION.

While a comprehensive review of graduate programs is clearly needed, there is consensus that steps to allow for and encourage interdisciplinary research and teaching should proceed with alacrity. In particular, the department-driven model of teaching workload assignments, workload and P&T documents for faculty, and

barriers to team teaching should all be reconsidered. We recommend that this review proceed in parallel with similar efforts focused on undergraduate education and that position descriptions for new hires should include the ability and desire to teach in interdisciplinary programs or in multiple disciplines. In addition, at the graduate level, the college should act to facilitate the adoption of new interdisciplinary graduate programs for which clear demand and potential for prominence is demonstrated.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #3 – RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO DELAWAREANS AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL.

While our graduate and professional programs are increasingly national and international in scope, we are committed to providing access to education at this level to the Delaware community at-large. We recommend that we renew our Commitment to Delawareans at the graduate level by introducing discounted tuition for in-service Delaware teachers.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #4 – ESTABLISH A COUNCIL OF DIRECTORS OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS.

To improve communication and collaboration and to foster the development of interdisciplinary initiatives, the college should establish a council of graduate program directors. This group should meet regularly during the academic year, as should sub-groups of directors from related programs.

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEM #5 – SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE MINORITY PIPELINE INITIATIVES.

The college has worked closely and effectively with the Office of Graduate and Professional Education to enhance the recruitment and retention of underrepresented students in recent years. We have sustained a number of innovations established initially through Graduate Program Improvement Grants. Our partnership with the Graduate Office should also include coordination of University representation at strategic national conferences (e.g., the Annual Biomedical Conference for Minority Students) that are recruitment venues for many disciplines.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Mission Critical Issues

Appendix B – Process Documentation

Appendix C – Survey Questions

Appendix D – Data

Appendix A – Mission Critical Issues

As the Strategic Planning Committee engaged with various constituents throughout the college, the discussion often turned to issues that, while not necessarily strategic in nature, are nonetheless *mission critical*. While no specific recommendations will be made concerning these, the committee does strongly recommend that the issues raised here be given careful and thorough consideration by the college administration. The issues discussed are of broad concern and in many cases are prerequisites or co-requisites necessary for the successful implementation of any strategic plan. Following is a summary of each of these issues.

CONTINUING NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY

Concerns relating to Continuing Non-Tenure Track, or CNTT Faculty, were expressed in almost every faculty focus group and took two main forms. First, while CNTT faculty themselves indicated a strong commitment and dedication to the teaching mission of the college, in particular at the undergraduate level, there is widespread anxiety among CNTT faculty about their status at UD and significant concern among tenure-track faculty about increasing reliance upon CNTT positions to meeting the teaching needs of the college. Both these anxieties are often expressed conjoined with a concern that decisions by the college and University are increasingly driven by purely financial goals to the detriment of academic concerns. Moreover, the increased use of such faculty is seen as a threat to the number of traditional tenure track faculty positions and even to the nature of the position itself. Second, there is often a strong sense among both CNTT faculty themselves and tenure track faculty that CNTT faculty are undervalued and labor under a system that is inherently unfair. CNTT faculty forcefully expressed frustration at the lack of alignment between their primary workload in teaching and the methods of evaluation used to measure their effectiveness. They frequently noted that the overreliance on student evaluations created a disincentive for innovative teaching or increasing expectations of student work. More broadly, they expressed deep concern that their category of work is not valued within a university culture built around the model of tenure-track research-focused faculty, and they criticized the criteria for promotion of CNTT faculty as being unclear or unattainable in practice.

SPACE AND FACILITIES

Concerns about space and facilities arose with predictable frequency. These concerns fall naturally into two subcategories, *quantity and quality* and *future space needs*.

Quantity and Quality

Typical concerns revolved around a lack of space or the quality of existing space. In several areas these needs were seen as particularly acute. Teaching laboratory space for the sciences, space for the writing center, and space for the advising center were all mentioned as high priority needs. A need for additional graduate student office space was also often expressed. College staff expressed a frustration with a lack of classroom space. A concern with *space inequity* was also often expressed. There is a perception among faculty that some departments have high quality space while others have poor quality space. Faculty often concluded from this that those with high quality space were valued by the college, while those with poor quality space were not.

Future Space Needs

Concerns about the absence of types of space were also common. Here, two main concerns were expressed. First, a lack of technologically equipped classrooms was noted. This was of special concern to those in secondary education who noted the difficulty in training future teachers without access to equipment typically found in the 21st century high school classroom. Second, the lack of quality meeting space, both formal and informal, was frequently commented upon.

ASSOCIATE IN ARTS PROGRAM

The Associate in Arts Program (AA) has recently rejoined the College of Arts and Sciences. The Strategic Planning Committee had the opportunity to engage these constituents extensively and while the AA Program appears in some of the strategic recommendations above, overall this program is so different and their concerns so unique, it was felt that separate mention of many of these concerns was warranted here.

The Associate in Arts Program is one of the key ways in which the University fulfills its Commitment to Delawareans. While the Wilmington campus is the largest of the three, AA faculty and staff have developed a close, long-term relationship with generations of students from southern Delaware and take great pride in their work of creating access to higher education for these students. In many ways, this program is *the* face of the University of Delaware for the southern half of the state, and the Newark campus is perceived by many students and their families as removed and intimidating. The AA team sees tremendous opportunity in further engaging both the first-generation students in this population and the growing market of lifelong learners among the increasing retiree population. It also believes that the University is ceding this market to other institutions through its general lack of commitment to the program and inconsistent handling of it. For example, the group voiced concern about not receiving support from the Office of Admissions and expressed its anxiety about the ways in which the university's current branding initiatives are off-putting to many of its students: the tag "East Coast Classic" was cited as especially damaging in this regard. This group also expressed frustration concerning their perceived relationship with the University. Frequent administrative realignments, misperception of their mission, a lack of integration into University operations, a lack of input into their relationship with DelTech, and a sense that their facilities are significantly inferior to those on the main campus facilities all contribute to this feeling.

FACULTY TIME

Across higher education, it is generally appreciated that faculty time is both the most expensive and most valuable resource of any institution and should therefore be used as effectively as possible. Within CAS, however, there is widespread concern that this resource is being taken up with inefficient service functions and with bureaucratic tasks that could be better handled by specialist staff members. Examples that were cited included the more mechanical aspects of student advising, compliance responsibilities related to external grants, travel and purchasing. While the sense of being overworked and of being worked inefficiently is by no means unique to UD, there was a pervasive sense in the feedback the committee received that, to achieve its strategic goals, the college could and should address specific areas where the faculty feel a particular sense of frustration at the demands placed upon them and the inefficiencies within the institutional bureaucracy.

Appendix B – Process Documentation

Each focus group was provided with the following set of questions as prompts to the discussion. Generally, focus group leaders used these as a starting point and as a guide for the groups, but allowed the discussion to follow the path that seemed natural. These questions were constructed by the Strategic Planning Committee, piloted with an initial test group, modified based on responses, and then used for future focus groups. Note that for particular meetings, such as those with undergraduate students, the questions were further modified to become appropriate for the attendees.

- Where are the college’s greatest strengths and weaknesses? In terms of teaching/research/advising?
- How can interdisciplinary opportunities for the college best be strengthened in the next five to ten years?
- What opportunities, challenges, and threats do you see for the college in the next ten years?
- What are your department’s/program’s/unit’s greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- What could your unit do to enhance the college’s greatest strengths or address the weaknesses that you’ve identified?

After the first pilot group, the twenty-one focus groups with which members of the committee met were:

Faculty Focus Groups	Staff Focus Groups	Student Focus Groups
Arts Faculty	Open meetings (2)	Graduate students
Assistant Professors (tenure track)	Open meeting for AA Downstate Staff	International students
Department Chairs and Program Directors		Undergraduate students
Directors of Graduate Studies		Students from underrepresented groups
Directors of Undergraduate Studies		
CNTT Faculty		
Humanities Faculty		
Named Chairs and Professors		
Natural Sciences Faculty		
Social Sciences Faculty		
Secondary Education Coordinators		
AA Downstate Program Faculty		
Open meetings (2)		

Appendix C – Survey Questions

The basic content of the questions used for the focus groups remained the same for the survey. However, the five multi-part questions were broken into fourteen single-part questions to allow for ease of response. The survey questions used were:

1. What are the college's greatest strengths in terms of teaching?
2. What are the college's greatest strengths in terms of research?
3. What are the college's greatest strengths in terms of advising?
4. What are the college's greatest weaknesses in terms of teaching?
5. What are the college's greatest weaknesses in terms of research?
6. What are the college's greatest weaknesses in terms of advising?
7. How can interdisciplinary opportunities for the college best be strengthened in the next five to ten years?
8. What opportunities do you see for the college in the next ten years?
9. What challenges do you see for the college in the next ten years?
10. What threats do you see for the college in the next ten years?
11. What are your department/program/unit's greatest strengths?
12. What are your department/program/unit's greatest weaknesses?
13. What could your unit do to enhance the college's greatest strengths that you've identified?
14. What could your unit do to address the college's greatest weaknesses that you've identified?

The survey was sent to all faculty and staff in the college. The survey link was accessed by 266 potential respondents and the survey was completed by 137 of these. Due to the open-ended nature of the questions, analysis required coding of the results. Initial coding was done on a small sample of survey responses by Julio Carrión, Iain Crawford and John A. Pelesko. Julio Carrión then worked with three political science graduate students to read and code all survey responses. This team prepared a report for the committee.

Appendix D – Data

During the strategic planning process, the committee sought to obtain data relevant to its discussions. It quickly became apparent that in general, data about the college was either unavailable or difficult to access. As such, data is crucial for the decision making process, we strongly recommend institutional changes in the area of data. As mentioned in the body of the report, a College Fact Book should be created, kept up-to-date, and made readily available. In addition, the depth of available data, especially longitudinal data, should be increased and again, made readily available. Following is a list of the data obtained for the committee that was found to be useful in informing the discussion. This list may serve as a starting point for a broader college institutional research initiative.

- Organizational chart of the college
- Faculty headcounts by department
- Faculty headcounts by academic rank and position type
- Staff headcounts by department
- Undergraduate majors, current enrollment data
- Undergraduate majors, current enrollment data with ethnicity
- Undergraduate minors, current enrollment data
- Graduate programs, current enrollment data
- Graduate programs, Ph.D. completion rates
- Graduate programs, M.S. and M.A. completion rates
- Graduate programs, Ph.D. time to degree