

Academic Strategic Plan Progress Report

March & April 2015

Leadership Planning

Town Hall Planning - March

- The leadership team organized a series of town hall meetings that took place in April which were opened to the entire Vanderbilt community (faculty, staff and students). The team worked with the various committees to solicit input on elements to be presented during the meetings.

Town Hall Meetings – April 6, 7, and 16

- Town hall meetings took place in various locations across campus. More than 150 people from the Vanderbilt Community attended.
- Feedback Summary
 - *Trans-Institutional vs Department/Specialization:* Some faculty were concerned that the trans-institutional focus could erode important advancements in specialized research and/or weaken departments. The leadership group noted that discovery and research scholar grants would continue to support specialized research and could be expanded. They also noted that the strengthening of “centers” has the effect of strengthening departments as both are inextricably linked by the academic organization/national ranking system.
 - *Budget Concerns:* Various concerns were raised about trade-offs that might need to be made to fund Opportunity Vanderbilt and the strategic plan. The leadership team noted that many aspects of the plan were ideal fundraising projects for Development and Alumni Relations. They also noted that the Chancellor's office was devoting some funds to the plan and that the Provost's office is working to develop standard operating procedures that would help create efficiencies and free up funds. It was noted that a more open dialogue about the budget process should take place.
 - *Graduate and Professional Education:* It was noted that professional education (which has the most revenue generating potential) had been somewhat overlooked in the plan and that graduate education was not receiving enough attention. The leadership team reminded the group that a task force on graduate education was one of the first working groups formed and an executive summary of their work would be released soon. It was noted that new programs and enhancements for both would likely be the result of work done through TIPS, cross-college teaching, healthcare solutions and other plan initiatives.
 - *Idea development:* A few faculty members asked if there would be funding support for faculty to get together to develop ideas for immersions or cross-college teaching. The leadership noted that while some TIPS proposals had similar suggestions, the administration would also be open to considering one-off requests depending on the dollar amounts. Others asked about a TIPS matchmaking process.

- *Diversity*: It was noted that diversity and inclusion are not specifically addressed in the plan. The leadership noted that it is a major focus at the institutional level and that the plan does address it in a variety of ways. Some TIPS proposals addressed the issue directly and the TIPS Council takes diversity into consideration when evaluating proposals. The healthcare solutions initiatives will address diversity directly given that many health determinants are related to socio-economic differences. It was noted that UC was developing an even more focused approach similar to that of VUMC that has been so impactful.
- Feed back from the meetings will be shared with the committees as they prepare their end of year reports.

Website Overhaul

- The Academic Strategic Plan website was overhauled with the goal of increasing transparency and opportunities to provide feedback. The site now reflects progress on various initiatives and lists committees and advisory boards. The site also includes the leadership team under the contact section. As working documents are posted a comment feature will be added.

Undergraduate Residential Experience

Immersion

Meetings and Progress

- Two meetings took place in March to make up for the meeting missed in February due to weather. In the second meeting, the committee discussed what elements of their work should be presented in the town hall meetings. The group felt that the faculty should be asked to share immersive experiences or programs that they are involved with at present. It was also stressed that the leadership team communicate that the goal is to expand upon the already solid foundation of immersion experiences in order to offer each student an opportunity to be producers of knowledge and students who can “engage, question and forge change.”

Next Steps

- The committee is reviewing talking points developed for the Office of Admissions as a starting point for summarizing the articulation of Immersion Vanderbilt that took place over the course of the year. The final document will help to define Immersion Vanderbilt and its distinctions and offer examples of immersive experiences.

Cross College Teaching

Meetings and Progress

- The group synthesized input from the faculty retreat and further articulated the committee’s progress in order to present during the town hall meetings.
- The group felt that they had identified significant interest across campus with numerous examples of on-going, successful CCT that should be supported and expanded. The group felt that barriers are primarily bureaucratic and funding-related, with funding being the primary challenge. The group has preliminarily been exploring approaches

including an allocation of funds to the effort, an allocation of a proportion of classes to CCT by college, or a combination of both.

Next Steps

- TBD

Trans-Institutional Programs

TIPS

Meetings and Progress

- The review panels reviewed the 64 proposals and a subset of top proposals were submitted to the TIPS Council for review.
- The TIPS Council has developed a final list of top rated proposals to consider for further review.

Next Steps

- Council will meet April 29 and will make recommendations to Jeff Balser and Susan Wentz.
- Final announcements will be made in late-May with funding to start July 1.

Healthcare Solutions

Meetings and Progress

- In response to recommendations resulting from the Faculty Retreat the leadership team requested to establish an ad hoc Health Solutions Task Force. Vice Chancellors Balser and Wentz approved the creation of the Task Force, requesting that Bonnie Miller serve as the chair. Invitations were distributed to the following individuals, all of whom accepted the appointment:
 1. Bob Dittus (SOM)
 2. Dan Roden (SOM)
 3. Katherine Donato (A&S)
 4. Melinda Buntin (SOM)
 5. Terry Dermody (SOM)
 6. Mark Wallace (SOM)
 7. Mavis Schorn (SON)
 8. Benoit Dawant (VUSE)
 9. Larry Van Horn (OWEN)
 10. Roger Cone (SOM)
 11. Consuelo Wilkins (SOM)
 12. Holly Tucker (A&S)
 13. Bruce Compas (Peabody)
 14. Keith Meador (SOM)
- The first goal of this task force is to undertake an inventory of all interdisciplinary centers and institutes that exist across the university and medical center that deal with health-related issues. This inventory will include a listing of the major initiatives each center currently pursues. Based on this inventory of current activities, the second goal will be to prioritize and refine the eight initiatives listed below, derived from the Strategic Plan.
 1. Expand current MD/PhD program in the biomedical sciences and endow additional scholarships to support this growth.
 2. Expand the MD/PhD program to include options for PHD studies in the humanities and social sciences and endow scholarships to support this growth.
 3. Create sustainable platforms to elevate support for fundamental research yielding discoveries about the molecular basis of disease and its prevention and treatment.

4. Expand current personalized medicine research platforms that focus on the molecular basis of wellness and disease, prevention and treatment.
5. Expand personalized medicine research programs that focus on the social, behavioral, economic, legal and political determinants of health.
6. Develop forums that facilitate interaction between the biomedical sciences, social sciences and humanities regarding health-related issues and efforts.
7. Develop innovative interdisciplinary centers to support discovery and learning about health.
8. Develop novel undergraduate, graduate and professional degree and joint degree programs focused on educating 21st century health care leaders.

Next Steps

- The first task force meeting will take place May 12.

Education Technologies

Meetings and Progress

- The Educational Technology Strategy Group met during March to review the outcomes of the Coursera Partnership Conference, discuss a recent vendor visit to campus, and review School of Nursing initiatives in the technology area. Discussion focused on resources needed for developing proposed campus credit-bearing programs. One identified need is to build development teams for digital learning.
- A new workshop series, "Conversations on Digital Pedagogy," was launched in March, co-hosted by the Vanderbilt Institute for Digital Learning and the Center for Teaching. The first program focused on the use of Twitter in the classroom, and a second workshop on the Flipped Classroom is planned for April. Videos for VIDL seminars and events are housed at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/vidl/seminars.php>.
- The Heard Library System spent February and March completing a self-study on how to reallocate time and resources in light of the strategic plan; more than a dozen Educational Technology library-based initiatives were identified by the staff in a report to be submitted to the Provost.

Next Steps

- Identification of existing Educational-technology committees on campus and establish information-flow plan for next academic year.
- Gather criteria for a possible vendor bid in support of programs seeking to develop on-line for-credit course work.

Advisory Boards

Staff Advisory Board

Meetings and Progress

- The group met and discussed progress made so far by the various other committees. The SAB requested access to any further reports coming out of any of the committees or the faculty retreat in order to provide input.

Next Steps

- Final reports from the cross-college teaching and immersion committees will be shared with the SAB as well as any notes from the town hall meetings.

Undergraduate Student Advisory Board

- The group met in March to discuss the SEC Collaboration grant and decided to forgo the opportunity until the 2017 cycle. This will allow Vanderbilt to support UTK's proposal. It will also allow the Immersion program to develop more fully (VUs proposed idea was an Immersion Fair).

Graduate Student Education Task Force and Graduate Student Advisory Board

- The task force submitted a report to the provost in March and an executive summary in April.
- The executive summary is attached with an excerpt here:
Investing in graduate education will enhance both undergraduate education and our research enterprise. The Graduate School and its Dean must advocate strongly for the resources and attention required in order to elevate our graduate programs to a level commensurate with Vanderbilt's other achievements and reputation. The Graduate School should strengthen the following focus areas: administration, quality and diversity, career and professional development, interdisciplinary programs, graduate student support services, student tracking and program support, international affairs, and special programs.
- Next steps will be to develop a communications plan designed to gather feedback and to develop and implementation plan.

Professional Student Advisory Board

- The group did not meet in March or April.

MyVU Stories

1. [VU community gets update on strategic plan at town halls](#)
2. [Vanderbilt community invited to Strategic Plan town halls April 6, 7 and 16](#)