

Dear Colleagues,

During the Faculty Retreat and the Week 2 Friday Conversation, I asked faculty to participate in a set of Academic Planning activities, which would be beneficial in and of themselves but also as preparation for the next college wide strategic plan. I asked you to articulate your vision for both our students and faculty, about what we want our college to look like a decade from now. I also engaged our academic staff in this planning activity. Vision statements that emerged from these discussions are below:

Vision for Students

To provide an environment that fosters intellectual sophistication and curiosity, develops critical thinking, and instills a desire to keep learning. Confident and self-aware, socially conscious, well rounded, and responsible, our students are independent thinkers engaged in the larger community and can adapt to a changing world without compromising their values.

Vision for Faculty

To serve as architects of a vibrant and diverse intellectual community, and models of integrity and inquiry for our students. To be passionate teachers and mentors, who together with our students embrace reflective thinking, a balanced life, and are socially conscious and engaged in the larger community.

When asked to discuss specific ideas and priorities (Aspirations and Opportunities) that would help us realize our vision, faculty and staff have offered creative and inspiring ideas, and I've heard interest and enthusiasm coalescing around several interesting themes and concepts. Now I'd like to ask us to both prioritize and build on these themes and ideas, so that we can make a compelling case for these priorities in our next strategic plan.

I'd like to invite all faculty and staff members to a strategic academic planning working session on Wednesday November 7, 2012 from 9 am - 12 noon. Our goal at this session will be to discuss ways in which we can focus on and sharpen these relatively broad ideas into more well defined goals and strategies. This includes defining what we want and how it relates to the vision, and creating a set of goals, strategies and structures that will be needed to accomplish these goals. We will be working towards creating a cohesive and succinct case making statement for our priorities including a robust rationale statement for why these initiatives are important for Augustana's future.

I have numbered five priorities below. The day will be structured so that people interested in discussing priority #1 will work together in a room; those interested in discussing priority #2 will be assigned a different room, etc. I want you to be involved in the conversations you are most passionate about (you are, after all spending time over break to do this important work!). Please sign up for the priority that you are truly passionate about. The overarching/broad ideas generated so far that we would like to explore are as follows:

- Priority #1: Increased community connections within our region that is embedded in the curriculum and outside the curriculum. More intentional partnering between the Augustana community and others in our region and the global community: maximizing our place-location and global outreach-connections. (Discussion facilitated by Pareena Lawrence)
- Priority #2: A robust student success center, which would provide support for success across the curriculum for all levels of learners including resources for international, ESL, and 1st generation college students. The center could be a link to better connect student services to academic services and the curriculum. (Discussion facilitated by Kristin Douglas)
- Priority #3: Explore the potential for new interdisciplinary programs, strengthen existing programs focusing on interdisciplinarity, and cultivate relationships between departments to increase the opportunities for collaboration in the spirit of liberal education (Discussion facilitated by Margaret Farrar)
- Priority #4: Improved opportunities to better help our students see how to connect their majors, minors and our core curriculum to their careers. Better access to experiential learning opportunities such as study abroad, internships, student research and more use of Augie Choice as part of our overall curriculum. (Discussion facilitated by Ellen Hay)
- Priority #5: Identify more precisely the ways that we should use technology and online learning mechanisms (e.g. blended learning, partnering with similar institutions, etc.) to improve our effectiveness in achieving institutional and/or departmental learning outcomes without compromising 1) the role of interpersonal interactions between faculty and students, and 2) our commitment to a liberal arts mission. (Discussion facilitated by Mark Salisbury)

Please use the shared Google document to sign up for your working group preference.

https://docs.google.com/a/augustana.edu/document/d/1Taa6iE00Oicvch8h_P8gj1dHe59VxP3HGmyHoHAiUPI/edit

This workshop will take place on November 7, 2012, 9:00 – noon (we will serve breakfast and lunch). We will meet in **Olin Auditorium** and head to our individual sessions which will also be held in Olin. The workshop isn't mandatory, of course, but I sincerely hope that many of you can join us. For those who want to participate in the process but cannot attend the session, please feel free to make an appointment with me or email me to discuss your ideas. Please note that the two working groups on Advising and Mentoring and Faculty Development Initiatives are already working on ways to improve advising and mentoring experiences and on ways to realize our faculty vision. In addition, our General Education committee is working on ways to better connect our vision of a liberal arts education with our students and their families and EPC will work on ways to strengthen our Senior Inquiry Program. I have also asked Faculty Senate to consider examining our current governance (committees) and divisional structure.

I hope to see you Wednesday morning at 9:00 am on November 7, 2012!

Pareena