Questions and Discussion from the Faculty Senate - 2/9/2015

Discussion generated by Michelle Janke’s opening presentation:

Is the SPDT still looking for topic team members?
What is the makeup of the SPDT? How is the membership of the SPDT distributed across the institution? What percentage faculty, staff, students?
How binding is the completed plan? Can the Board arbitrarily change it after they accept it?
Why isn’t the Faculty Senate represented in the Organizational schematic for Strategic Planning?
It appears the planning process is on a short timeline. What happens if we need more time to complete the plan?
The President and the Board feel this is the “right” time for strategic planning, but could this actually be the wrong time? (Senator expressed concern that there are too many things happening now and this will create unnecessary work.)
Is this plan a rethink of Wiewel’s vision, or a furthering of it.

Discussion of Faculty Roles and Structure - Yellow card:

• Why are you asking us to prioritize Faculty Roles and Structures? If any of sub-topics on the yellow card are not considered in strategic planning, then the effort will be a failure.
• Faculty life should be added to the list. A faculty life study group was formed as a result of bargaining.
• Multi-disciplinarity and Collaboration should be added to this list. We need to structural support for this type of work if it is to be a priority at PSU.
• This list on this card should be limited to the academic areas faculty are comfortable having the Strategic Planning group “mess with.”
• Shared governance is not a possible priority; it is an established practice. As such it should not be listed on this card.
• Comment: A national trend toward the erosion of faculty governance and tenure. Don’t know how to rank these with this in mind.
• Comment: You’re missing the point re: the importance of the Senate role within the University governance.
Prioritization of Faculty Roles topics:

- Balance of teaching, research and service (area for collaboration with Innovative Research, shared governance (Faculty involvement in decision-making across the University), faculty expectations (Balance workload with rewards; role of online courses; faculty), faculty structure (Balance of tenure, non-tenure and adjunct faculty to support PSU mission), faculty development (career and professional development)

Faculty Roles, "Other" Suggestions

- Salary inequities among faculty, e.g. salary compression inversion
- Faculty climate
- Life/work balance
- Work environment
- Work environment
- Add work/life balance;
- Multidisciplinary collaboration and structures; faculty work/life balance
- Faculty life (collegiality, work environment)
- Faculty life - collegiality opportunity for interactions structural impediments to multidisciplinary

Faculty Roles, General Comments

- Not sure, Research and Service are different; For #1, role of tenure/future of tenure is important both this topic and others need to deal with the issue of the corporitization of higher ed. There are many cases where the corporate model simply should not apply. Corporations can fire low performing employees. Universities need to invest in low-performing students.
- Please clarify role of faculty senate in decision-making about the strategic plan (control vs. consult)
• We cannot weaken tenure; lots of overlap and hard to differentiate; Senate role is not debatable; I'm not convinced that this card represents a good division of concerns. And Senate is inviolable - no room for negotiation over senate's authority
  • All are critical to PSU's future
  • Include Faculty Senate in all discussions of shared governance
  • Senate should be a "box" on graphic feedback re: governance; Faculty life/work environment; Faculty governance is established (by by-laws)
  • Do not trust the process
  • No faculty no university!
  • Too hard!
  • Don't trust process; Sounds like a PR campaign for WW's Strategic Plan; The campus almost struck over WW's plan because faculty didn't agree with how WW prioritized spending
  • The faculty senate has to be differently involved; all are important; structure for multidisciplinary collaboration
  • All important!
  • Erosion of tenure; Add structures for multidisciplinary cooperation; Senate should be stakeholder and screener of draft plan
  • 1-4 are all extremely important. I'd prefer to make them all number 1.
  • FS matters!
  • Mission = quality education; Required qualifications for teaching faculty
  • These are all important; to prioritize seems to mean some can be ignored; not sure of role of strategic plan to guarantee these
  • Executive office committee chair; Don't want shared governance in SP
  • I don't trust the process; we should not be forced to rank these. All are important.
  • Cannot rank these they are all important. Also, the flow chart of process needs a specific box for faculty senate. Need an academic framing of these questions.

Discussion of Student Learning and Academic Success - Green card:

• Advising should be on this list of priorities.
• What is meant by the “Balance of Access and Quality?” This suggests a tension between the two; we need both!
• Add “capturing the best students in Oregon” to this list.
• We also need to prioritize the preparation and screening of students.
• Decisions in this process should be driven by the word “quality” in the existing mission statement.
• Post-bacs are an important constituency for PSU. Right now they are falling through the cracks. We need to think more broadly about exactly who our students are.
• Rather than the “impact of online learning” we need to think about its quality.
• This list doesn’t capture the interconnectedness of the learning process. These categories are not mutually exclusive. Preparation of students is an issue – technology and quality

• We need more resources if we are to continue being an access institution. Reality Check — do we have the resources to adequately fund the mission? Can’t invest in low-performing students and bring them up if we don’t have the resources to devote to them.

• Another way of asking this question: is the mandate of PSU Fundable?

• We are talking about teaching thought the faculty senate is not representative of faculty (adjuncts) who do 60-70% of the teaching. Coraggio should be talking to adjuncts about student learning and academic success.

Prioritization of Student Learning topics:

Student Learning, "Other" Suggestions

• Increase access to (illegible) for student success.
• Quality education -- this separate from access.
• Advising
• Ensure online programs are of sufficient quality.
• Advising
• Quality throughout.
• Quality of learning via online learning
• Advising
• Student responsibility in the learning
• advising.
• Quality
• Quality
• safe, weapon-less environment
• recruiting and incentives -- competing better for the best students
• preparation of students entering PSU
• recruitment reality -- programs to attract and prepare students
• transfer students?

Student Learning, General Comments

• Look at the elements of liberal arts education: writing, numeracy, and critical thinking. Many of these might be thought of as interrelated. There is no point in providing access if there is no quality. Oregon students deserve access to quality. Rethink as balance of online learning and quality. Assess outcomes of online classes.
• General education requirements that foster success (illegible). Other issues: Sufficient support for instructors/professors for quality teaching (issues ranging from TAs to class size & writing support.) Higher education ≠ career skills. Relates to "academic expectations and student preparation for career success" Grad vs. undergrad access/courses.
• These issues are interconnected -- difficult to rank.
• Need more resources to fulfill quality imperatives. Need standards, not a notion of online learning as a cash machine. Online learning is one part of the learning machine... not a panacea. Online teaching is more work.
• Learning assessments that address quality. Impact of online learning on quality. Resources need to be provided for any of these to be addressed in a meaningful way.
• Oversight of curriculum is a responsibility of Faculty Senate (see bylaws)
• (topics are) connected so much as to be the same!! Not just a job!! And it's fundamental impossibility. The Board mandate of PSU is not fundable. It has to be acknowledged in this process.
• "Balance of access and quality" = false comparison.
• Better recruitment of better students
• Services to support student success --> Advising.
• Balance of access and quality -- not antithetical. False dichotomy. "Services to support student success" -- advising. Recruiting students who will succeed.
• grade inflation. How to bring best possible process (illegible).
• Impact of online learning quality. Very difficult to rank.
• Add attention to grad students.
• The loss of quality tied to the push for online teaching is a major concern. We are not a corporation producing widgets. Need to prioritize real learning experiences over the financial expediency of moving toward so many online courses.
• "learning assessments" is a corporate model concept; concerned about quality of online learning
• Many of these are important and interrelated
• question how real the 40-40-20 effort is
• access' and 'quality' are not mutually exclusive
• this is a linear model. It does not capture the complexity of interrelated issues.

Discussion of Innovative Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities - Pink card:

• Role of students in research – opportunities for greater involvement, support for student-initiated research, etc.
• There should be more support for student initiated research.
• Right now the priorities seem to have shifted towards funded research. We need to recognize the interconnectedness of both funded and unfunded research.
• In fact, unfunded (or small r) research that addresses local issues may be more important to the community and to the institution’s reputation.
• How does the issue of grad v. undergrad students come in to play here?
• We need both things that make money and things that don’t. Please stop the dichotomy between them.

Prioritization of Innovative Research topics: 

![Graph showing prioritization of research topics]

- Definition of Research (small “research” vs. large “Research”), benefits and levels of support for each (both current and desired)
- Desired level of alignment of PSU mission with support for areas of research, scholarship and creative activity
- Balance of Teaching, Research and Service (area for collaboration with Faculty Roles Topic Team)
- Overcoming challenges associated with research/scholarship/creative activities
- Ties to the business and social science needs of the region
- Other
Research, "Other" Suggestions

- funding-support-funding
- graduate student support
- acknowledgement of disparities in research support for (illegible) disciplines & LESS preoccupation privileging -- w/ bus. $ research
- support for recruitment of good grad students
- balance science & liberal arts
- role of students in research, scholarship, creative activities
- (illegible) research (illegible) corporate research. Funding of research
- Research is assumed for tenure -- related faculty but not supported. What does this mean (big R vs small r) -- $v, SS, or no $
- Does U. strategic plan identify certain research themes and favor them?
- Student involvement in research (grad/undergrad - granularity)
- Value placed on non-externally sponsored research

Research, General Comments

- Don't know what it means. The challenge is the academy vs. the community perception of research
- How or should PSU engage in Research? Are we too far behind to catch up with the resources we have?
- Not clear what these are.
- support for student research (both undergraduate and graduate)
- add role student research
- as in, make it possible to be successful and work less than 12+ hours a day
- ties to business depends on discipline. Match demand with tenures. Can't be a great researcher with teaching load and service so high. Region = the world.
- greater involvement, more opportunities, student-initiated research
- how does research become a culturally-productive and educational activity v. funding generator?
- re: balance of teaching... REALISTIC balance. Role of students, greater opportunity for student research, rewarded, even if less "productive" for individual faculty member.
- reward for excellent work
- difficult to rank this list
- PSU needs to decide what it wants to be when it grows up -- a research university vs. access. Right now, PSU doesn't have the funding to do both quality reaching and big scale research