

Seattle University College of Arts & Sciences  
 Strategic Planning 2019/2020  
 September 9, 2019

PHASE 1: MEMO 4  
 Summary of Open Fora

I. Introduction

This memo summarizes the feedback gathered from open fora held in Spring 2019. There were two open fora with faculty and staff and one open forum with each of the following stakeholders: undergraduate students, graduate students, and ASCG.

II. Values

- Academic excellence: this value is seen as a strength, but some participants argued that there is unevenness in academic excellence--not all classes are of high quality or challenging and a number of students do not rise to the challenge.
- Creative and critical thinking: participants also reported seeing unevenness in how creative and critical thinking are manifested by students and faculty. Students bring a wide variety of perspectives, but their creativity is not always fostered. We have the potential to do more in this area. Students with certain types of disabilities cannot thrive as learners because disability accommodations are insufficient
- Jesuit tradition: there was disagreement about whether or not faculty, staff, and students show commitment to and understanding of the mission. Not consistent. Also, concern was voiced about the lack of a *common* understanding of social justice from a Jesuit perspective, even as most students are aware of the importance of social justice in our College, as well as about a greater focus on justice outside our university and college than in our community
- Community of learners: need more interdisciplinary and faculty-student collaborations. Some departments do this well. Students have too many financial difficulties. We need more scholarships and fewer barriers for students. We also need fewer barriers for interdisciplinary collaborations.
- Global concern: a global emphasis is not as evident as the language about this value suggests; some departments do more than others. There are not enough resources to support a global education. There is not enough global focus built into the curriculum. The language in this value and others is just student-centric.
- Leadership and teamwork: what we mean by leadership is not clear. It is not a value that is evident enough in the College.

II. Strengths

- Faculty: outspoken, deep dedication, commitment and care, great scholarship, knowledgeable
- Staff: deep dedication, supportive

- Cura personalis: Jesuit care for the whole person, beyond intellectual support; very good on advising
- Niche programs that give students choices
- Curriculum: broad options; students involved in research
- Diverse student body
- Social justice: commitment shared by many; opportunities for engagement
- Governance: improvement in shared governance
- Pedagogy: emphasis on teaching and pedagogy; liberal arts and humanities focus
- Location
- Large alumni networking opportunities
- Innovative research
- Dean's advising office

### **III. Model University/Vision for the Future**

- Leaders in changing the academy and addressing inequalities through meaningful engagement with, and promotion of, social justice, inclusivity, diversity, anti-racism, at all levels (faculty, staff, students, curriculum, community, compensation)
- Innovation and intersectionality have been a clarion call for our institution in the past 5 years since our strategic plan
- More inclusive teaching practices, radical revisioning of what it means to teach inclusively
- Workload, recognition and compensation more equitable, power structure turned upside down
- SU CAS dismantles toxic power structures and prioritizes racial and gender justice
- Faculty and staff of color are recognized and compensated for their invisible work
- Faculty research excellence celebrated and discussed
- A&S leads Catholic and Jesuit universities in reimagining how to be Jesuit and Catholic in today's world and in the face of realities like the damage done by the Church
- SU CAS and inclusive diverse college grounded in Jesuit Catholic roots
- Scholarships for underrepresented and historically disenfranchised students
- Students front and center when decisions are made; value placed on student-faculty interaction and quality of education, rather than number of students in the classroom
- Students prepared for satisfying careers in a rapidly changing world through emphasis on discernment, critical thinking, commitment to social justice, professional development
- All students write clearly and speak eloquently
- Opportunities for student-faculty research and for service learning and community engagement
- SU uses more hybrid learning
- CAS has made impressive strides in including students with disabilities. Creative approaches to catering to them.
- CAS starts Disabilities Studies minor

- Required global opportunities, more study abroad opportunities
- New building and teaching space for A&S: SU focuses on liberal arts
- A&S a model for how to integrate classroom, online learning, community, and professional worlds
- Innovative disciplinary and transdepartmental structures
- Faculty excellence: different emphases--from teaching and pedagogy, to excellence in research, and community engaged scholarship (ADVANCE grant)
- Faculty not siloed, research celebrated and discussed
- Collaboration and shared governance
- Most tenured women faculty in the country
- SU and CAS in particular have resisted the move towards adjunct faculty and a two-tiered faculty system, has the largest proportion of TT faculty among its peers
- Promotion of sense of community among faculty, staff, and students; commitment to each other; culture of care
- Innovation (ex., Humanities center for innovation, curricular and course-delivery innovation), risk-taking
- CAS helps solve homeless issue in Seattle and the West Coast
- CAS leads way in restorative justice
- Students/faculty/staff engage in meaningful social justice projects on and off campus
- While many universities around the country take pride in having the best group of scholars and researchers, five years ago SU decided that their priority was the education of their students and, as a result, they have become the number one university in terms of academic excellence. The research done by SU faculty is centered on what is going to be taught in the classroom and this kind of research is valued and recognized by the administration regardless the number of publications each individual has. Community engagement, service learning, internships and other non traditionally recognized activities that consume a big part of the time of the professors are celebrated. Faculty led or lead?
- Seattle University receives one billion dollar endowment. In recognition for its innovative leadership in creating a new vision for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning, SU has received a \$1billion endowment from an anonymous source. The focus on breaking down traditional barriers of discipline and moving towards a radically interdisciplinary approach that focuses on preparing students both for a rapidly evolving collaborative work force in a changing world that needs cooperation and inclusive teaching.
- We have an outstanding three-year humanities degree that pairs with every major, grounding students in the human condition and in a discipline.

#### **IV. Other input:**

- We need more transparency
- Injustice of adjunct faculty and staff pay
- UCOR is an extra layer of bureaucracy
- Procure and CLSS systems are very challenging to work with

- Multi-year budget is a must and the discipline to stick to it
- Are we brave enough to stop doing some things in order to do what we must do?
- Prioritize staff in practice and not just language
- Continue to work toward shared governance: need better/more efficient decision-making structures. The top-down single person model that is the hallmark of Catholic-Jesuit schools is of another era. A jus system values all voices and lets those voices decide.
- Need to prioritize marginalized students
- Revisiting the strategic plan, not losing momentum, recognize it's not static
- There doesn't seem to be a clear sense of what it means to be part of CAS. I am not sure if this is an identity that students feel. If that is a goal, there should be more cross-disciplinary opportunities.
- Morale amongst faculty and staff seems to be an issue and should be addressed.
- We have to improve faculty/staff morale this chronic sense of unhappiness with working conditions, compensation is making it difficult to imagine a bright future.
- LCIJ should be a permanent standing committee and not be dependent on the Dean's largesse. The struggle for intersectional justice will likely last for generations. Better support for faculty development.
- We need to have more faculty development funds for research (defined in broad terms) for research and program development.
- Authenticity matters to our students. It matters to them if their experiences and identities are reflected in the coursework, faculty we hire etc.
- How will we as a college lead and not just play catch up? Faculty/student research is a hot topic across many institutions. How will we, not just do that, but do it differently? Hybrid learning is going on across universities. How will we do it differently?
- Rank goals but do not shy away from pursuing the most innovative on the list. Be bold enough to reshape the academic to a vision that works better for all involved.
- Reshuffle the resources for departments/centers/programs into innovative new structures
- Create more large structures (humanities center) that funds annual conference/presentation of faculty research/involves high profile speakers/changing annual theme.
- Fund one-year sabbaticals 100%
- Celebrate research in meaningful ways with our colleagues and students.
- We need to revise APRs and reconsider merit raises vs. equal raises for everyone who meets expectations (chop the top of the scale)
- We need to reconsider our student evaluation of teaching mechanism and how those are used in APR/tenure and promotion/adjunct rehiring/etc.
- Deep commitment to each other, culture of care, see goodness in each other, get out of scarcity mindset
- Attracts quality student enrollment across class and race/ethnically divides
- People of color in top leadership positions
- Overhaul of curriculum to reflect global liberal arts and social sciences
- Innovation in course delivery

- Faculty and staff compensated at the top of pay spectrum (Seattle as expensive place to live in)
- Change the dynamics of savior complex
- Transparency about initiatives, where they are going and who they are serving
- Departmental procedures are mismatched – this needs to be more streamlined
- More core classes on social justice movements – including higher level social justice courses that go past just the surface
- Sexuality not mentioned strongly in diversity trainings
- Ramifications on how perception works – privilege/advantage vs. minoritization for varying degrees of visibility of LGBTQI
- We need to make more use of online, hybrid learning and CANVAS
- We need Disability Studies classes and a minor. Accessibility to campus spaces for students with disabilities should be always at the forefront of design.
- Some SU students are homeless. Food pantry a good start
- Organize coffee with the Dean and chairs (once a month one of them) for students
- Use the atrium better: gatherings, screen with videos on each major
- Increase student engagement perhaps by creating a student leadership group focused on that
- Create a central calendar with events in the College (organized by departments, student groups, etc.); we need more events on issues