

## Comments Received on the College of Design Strategic Plan Update

March 6 to April 11, 2017

### April 11

I'm sorry it took me so long to look over the draft. I appreciate the amount of work you spent on it. I just have a few comments that I've noted. I hope they are helpful.

- Vision – change innovate to innovative
- Tactic 1b. – Maybe change to "programs that demonstrate" (I wasn't sure if it was the programs or the increased funding that demonstrate the power of diversity)
- Tactic 2a. - I support this goal but I'm not sure achieving this for "every student" is realistic or even wanted or needed by them. I can't imagine this goal or the next will be met and so is this a realistic goal?
- Tactic 2b. Again, I embrace and support the need to infuse multi-cultural perspectives in most of our courses but it may not be possible or relevant in ALL courses.
- Tactic 4b Perhaps some of the recruitment of non-majors to COD courses could include promotion of new interdisciplinary courses with other colleges.

### April 10

I had a meeting today and could not come to the discussion.

I would like to recommend that the main questions 1 and 4 of the Strategic Plan say "art and design" or "design and art" not simply "design".

Art emphasizes the humanities and thus does not seem to fit as a subset of design.

### April 10

Open Forum

The vision statement needs to incorporate the reality that our collective ability to generate intelligent, innovate responses also comes from disciplinary depth.

Tactic 1c. Change "two or three," to "at least two."

Tactic 2e. Is this tactic needed? If so, begin with "improve students' preparation for professional practice through...." Consider eliminating "expanded professional practice courses offerings"

Tactic 3c. Period after "domestic students." The rest of the sentence is not helpful.

### April 5

Several College of Design faculty members have expertise in design thinking processes and methodologies that are being called on and praised by entities outside the college. We need to find a way for every student in the college of design to learn these processes/methodologies. Our students' ability to provide innovation leadership could be an important hallmark of an ISU College of Design education that differentiates us from other universities who offer design education.

Mine the results of diversity conversations that occurred during the last three semesters for initiatives that can improve the college's climate.

Develop strategies for transforming the curriculum from a Eurocentric/UScentric to global focus.

### April 4

I like the concept of exposing students to a multi-cultural opportunity within and out of the United States, but I think one of the opportunities missed when I was at Iowa State was the opportunity to spend a summer working construction. Too often I have seen architects whom hold contractors in low regard, and while pulling out old details, do not understand the real process of construction.

I would recommend that Iowa State ( specifically Architecture) develop an internship program linking construction firms with the University to at least offer summer work opportunities under the theorem that knowing something about construction will make the student a better architect in the long run.

#### April 4

Thank you for sending the draft to review. I feel that this document encompasses many positive aspects of the college and its projected direction.

I have a comment that may not be something which fits into the goals and motivation of this document, but pertains to student learning.

In the 14+ years since I graduated from the college, many students have come to work as interns with me, at Iowa State. I know that back in 1998, the general consensus I received for the college's discipline was (and seems to still be) conceptual vs. technical, in regards to design. I have grown to appreciate that perspective and feel blessed to have that kind of education.

However, I encourage an improved curriculum designed toward understanding the conceptual reasons for utilizing industry standard mediums for sharing ideas. By this, I am referring to the open-source communities and version control in regards to creation/development. Designers can utilize resources such as GitHub to maintain and create using version control and not only share information, but collaborate more efficiently and effectively. This isn't just a resource for coders. I have seen researchers use this for papers and highly collaborative projects. In addition to GitHub, it's important for students to understand the difference between open-source and proprietary development (of design, research, ideas, code). I feel it beneficial to progress our students to a higher level of understanding in regards to these concepts; so that they know how to collaborate with others on a large scale and be able to effectively tap into communities that are internationally connected. And truly expand our student's conceptual knowledge of how to connect and create in a highly collaborative environment, with people that may not be sitting next to you, but creating with you, at a desk in another country.

Thank you for your time and opportunity to share.

#### April 3

I read through the document and think overall the revision/update looks pretty good. I might question the lack of metrics since the LAAB is really into SMART goals, i.e., measurable ones. But that said, I appreciate the shortening of the new draft and things look pretty reasonable.

#### March 31

As requested I reviewed your 27 March Draft 1 Strategic Plan Update and offer the following comments. Unfortunately I was unable to provide my comments using Track Change. You'll need to cross-walk my comments below to your draft update.

1. 1<sup>st</sup> ¶. 1<sup>st</sup> line, can you add specificity to the word "range"? 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, is this a plan for 2013-20 as listed or 2018-2025 as I hope you envision?
2. Our Mission .... add at end of 1<sup>st</sup> sentence "by providing users with an improved quality of life".
3. Our Vision .... 2<sup>nd</sup> line add after innovative "and cost-effective"
4. Goal 1. 1<sup>st</sup> line do you mean "creativity" rather than creative? 2<sup>nd</sup> line, after current add "technological and societal"
5. 1a. 2<sup>nd</sup> line, delete address and substitute "offer solutions to"
6. 1b. after disciplines add "including collaborations with the University's engineering, IT, and science disciplines".
7. Goal 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> line, after academic add "and practitioner"
8. 2d. Are you only focusing on less developed countries? Developed countries also provide students with great educational prospects such as the Dutch with floating towns.
9. Goal 3. 3a. Sentence meaning is unclear.

Students today need to be exposed to real world problems and have meaningful discussions with designers, engineers, contractors, and laborers about solutions. In your vision for the future you mentioned sustainability. I hope you are including natural disasters such as designing buildings and structures against extreme loads including seismic, extreme winds, flooding, snow, etc. I hope these comments are helpful. Please contact me for questions.

### March 30

I was just thinking about emailing you to check in the other day. It's been quite some time (going on five years since graduation)! I hope all is well in Ames. I've included some general and goal-specific feedback on the strategic plan below.

General: To what extent can you incorporate the planning students into the strategic planning process in the future? Student facilitation? Student representatives? Meeting observation? It's a good exercise for them to get experience with.

Goal 1: For tactics c – e, I would encourage you to commit the College to more measurable metrics. It's easy not to prioritize these issues when there is, for example, no clear vision of what “increased administrative support for faculty” looks like in practice.

(Around) Goals 2-3: If the College is very serious about expanding diversity perspectives, I'd recommend looking into UT Austin's School of Architecture Committee on Diversity and Equity (CODE) and their recent thematic hire for a tenure-track position for an assistant professor in Race and Gender in the Built Environment. (<http://soa.utexas.edu/about/valuing-diversity>) I believe it's a strong reflection of student-led initiatives being supported and implemented with faculty buy-in.

Goal 4: Bolster your social media presence – get students to share more images of work and get people excited to follow what's going on day-to-day.

Goal 4: I would also categorize Public Interest Design and other direct design initiatives with non-profit groups or resource-poor communities as perhaps more telling of the value and power of design than simply relaying the message digitally. This is a wonderful opportunity for recruitment of future students, new partnerships, as well as student experience. See partnerships with unlikely departments as potential for new and exciting potentials (e.g. What would a partnership between social work and design look like? Chemical engineering? Russian studies?)

Other: This has little to do with the strategic plan, but I took the time to give feedback on that, so gimme a second to soapbox. :) I don't know if the planners still have to go through the core curriculum in year one with all other portfolio programs, but I want to reiterate how important that year really is. It's because of that curriculum that I was exposed to design, met friends across all (literally, all) design programs, and began to understand the relationships between disciplines. If you want to communicate the value of design most effectively, I think it only makes sense to start by instilling this value in planners as a core foundation of their education and training.

Thank you for your time and hard work on this effort. I know it can be tricky and labor-intensive getting faculty and students to gather as well as meaningfully contribute to these sorts of exercises. I'm excited to see where the school is headed and I thank you for allowing me the time and space to contribute to the discussion; I hope it might be of some use.

Wishing you and the rest of the CoD family my warm regards,

### March 30 Design Community on Diversity

Below are the comments from the student meeting. Much of the focus was on integrating more diverse perspectives, traditions, designs....etc. in the course curriculum.

- Offer more broad examples of artist from different cultural backgrounds. Faculty need to infuse global perspectives and diverse content in course curriculum.
- Offer a faculty exchange program for a semester to non-western regions i.e., China, Africa, India.
- Culture has a big influence on what people regard as good and bad design. Offer a “Culturorama” event in which students can display work from different countries to help broaden faculty, staff, and students understanding of cultural influences on design. Students will investigate each cultural group and design products that meet the unique needs of each culture.
- Increase Visual Communication- Have the college install a giant monitor that displays events, lectures, and opportunities happening in the College of Design.

Provide more opportunities for student to connect with alumni and receive mentoring to aid in their successful transition after graduation.

### **March 29**

My major interest has been Park (county, state and regional) design. When I was at Iowa State (74 - 78) it was difficult to gather classes from related curriculum to create the program that I desired. I eventually wrote my own degree program in which I graduated. I do not know how that relationship is now.

I think that there needs to be a strong effort to place graduates in the employment market. I was fortunate when I graduated to land employment with the Polk Co. Conservation Board as the Director of Development. It was good training for three years. No one else in my class had a job immediately after graduation.

### **March 29**

I graduated from ISU in 2015 (BArch). One thing that I believe you are missing from this strategic plan is having a much higher emphasis on professional practice. I along with many of my friends in architecture and landscape architecture, as well as my fiancée who graduated from the graphic design program, have all experienced real world experience now for two years. I believe I can speak for everyone to say we were not as prepared as we should have been.

I learned many things in the architecture program but the one semester of "professional practice" is laughable. Many of the graduates will go on to work in an office environment, using Revit and other programs day to day while attempting to learn real life problems like code, waterproofing an envelope, etc. Yes, I could make a pretty rendering of a building and run a structural calculation on a worksheet after graduating. However, I learned more about how the real world operates in the first 2 months of working in an office than I did over 5 years at Iowa State. The program teaches you to become a designer, not a businessperson. There are no architecture business classes. There is 1 Revit class, yet I use Revit 9 hours everyday. Where is the sense in that?

College is too expensive and too time consuming for us not to have the opportunity to take classes that will actually help us when we enter the professional environment. I went to the career fair and talked to many soon-to-be professionals about what they have learned and it was the same story as me. They knew how to use every rendering program known to man, but if you asked them about basic construction methods and assemblies, they wouldn't have any idea what you are talking about.

Iowa State needs an edge. Upon applying for jobs, students in every program are expected to know how a business runs and how to efficiently use software. Give the students the option to take professional practice classes every single semester and help them transition to an office environment.

### **March 28 Open Forum**

The college needs much more money available each year to seed faculty research, for grant matches and to support research-related travel. There should be two or three call for awards each year as many opportunities arise at unusual times and waiting the better part of a year for funding may not be workable. There was also a desire for quick turnaround time from receipt of proposals to announcement of awards.

- End each academic year with a 3 to 4 day competition that includes students, faculty, and staff as an extracurricular activity. Grant awards to winning teams as an incentive.
- Expand the summer design camp program
- Open access to college courses to the university community.
- Many international students struggle in classes, particularly lecture courses, because of a language barrier. Find ways to help international students succeed in these classes through supplemental instruction, work study students fluent in Chinese and English who can help interpret, etc.
- Develop strategies that will promote learning foster community between international and domestic students.
- Strengthen faculty mentoring – consider finding a senior faculty interested in shepherding, following, and supporting each new cohort of tenure eligible faculty.
- Continue working on the web site to improve the ease of finding information and as a tool to promote the college to prospective students and other external audiences.
- Need to let students take a deep breath every so often. Maybe we should have a faculty in-service day during which classes are not held and instead a day for fun and relaxation. Party at the end of fall term was a good move in the right direction.

## March 27

I've read at the document you sent 30 minutes ago.

Since you requested my comments, I've marked up in red only the first 1/3 page of the strategic plan, a document which seems to me replete with grammatical errors, inaccurate numbers, and inflated and imprecise language. (I now appreciate "We, the people" more than ever.)

Good luck with it, though, and I hope you can accept these thoughts in the spirit in which they are sent: as my contribution to the betterment of the plan.

PS: I've always thought 'strategy' an awfully militaristic term. Is the 'right word here?

Iowa State University's College of Design is a recognized leader in design education with a range of disciplines found in few colleges of its type. The 20~~13~~-20 strategic plan provides focus for the years ahead as we build on this solid foundation. [This should be 're-dated'. Is it only good for 2.5 years, then? ]

Our mission is to: Educate students to become successful [Architects? I don't consider an architect only a 'building designer', do you?] designers, planners, artists, and scholars who enhance human experience and improve the natural, social, and built environment. [your idea of 'enhancement' and 'improvement'?] Serve as a resource for Iowa and beyond through research, creative endeavors, extension, and outreach. [This sentence is either a command or a fragment. I imagine the latter. Is conventional grammar important in the COD? If so, I suggest you ask a grammarian to review the entire document.]

We value: Innovation, curiosity, collaboration, open exchange of ideas, diverse perspectives, environmental and social responsibility. Our vision for the future: Faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners [?'partners' has never been a more ambiguous word than in 2017] will be leaders [and who will be 'the led'? Traditionally, 'architecture' has strived, silently, to educate good employees, the best of whom become good managers of other employees. I want to suggest, if only for a minute, that a good architect is not necessarily a good leader, and that the former is of great value in the 'longer picture' of human development] who imagine and respond to challenges and opportunities in a sustainable manner [what does this mean, not least when so many faculty drive solo in big trucks to their post in an energy-hog of a building?] using innovative interdisciplinary approaches and technologies. [who master the tried and true?]

Goals & Tactics 1. Demonstrate the power and value of design through excellent research, creative, outreach, and extension programs including interdisciplinary collaborations that address current problems and opportunities. (Former goals 1, 2, & elements of 3.)

1a. Establish an annual thematic design charrette where multidisciplinary teams generate innovative ideas that address local, regional, and global challenges and opportunities.

1b. Broaden the scope of interdisciplinary option studios to include all of the college's disciplines.

[a & b, but multi-disciplinary seems to be at odds with 'money follows the student' economics, no?]

1c. Add new sources of private funding to incent and support educational, research, creative, outreach, and extension programs that demonstrate the power of diversity and interdisciplinary collaboration to fuel innovation and creativity.

[Add? It would seem, at this point, the dean's and department chairs' responsibility to secure sizable donations. If this is an agreed-upon fact, is it not also a prime criterion for the selection of deans and chairs?]

1d. Increase the num ...

## March 6

Thanks for this. I will write you about the strategic plan that you've sent—even though, I confess, all those boxes and mission talk are truly daunting. (I do remember Mission Control 50 years ago in Houston, and I've seen all those recent movies recounting the time. So I think I know what you're after, here.)

Who are we, Mark? Where we want to go is intimately tied to who we are, where we are, and where we have been. Charted facts are needed if we are to go beyond rhetoric to realistic planning for the future.

It'd be helpful to me if you would please forward a detailed budget showing the workings of the COD. Ideally, this budget would be as detailed as your strategic plan and show the past COD budgets (20 years or so), as well as the present budget, and the presumed budgets for future years. Money is, undoubtedly, a prime mover and motivation in all planning, and, of course, all planning—even strategic planning—must include accurate financial accounting. This, you already have. Please share it.

In addition to financial statistics, statistics on 'who we are' would be very helpful. These would include graphs and charts on student populations in the COD since the beginning of the new millennium: graphing the number of students; the tuition they paid; the expenditures of the COD (including a general number for faculty salaries); the square footage available to facilitate COD education; the number of faculty of the College; diversity records; the age of faculty each year; the number of faculty who left the COD each year; the 'rankings' of the various departments of the COD each year.

Every month I gladly spend many unpaid hours reporting on myself: to funders, to P&T committees, to committees verifying the decisions of P&T committees, to the Department, to the University, to the provost. I have thoughts about the strategic plan you have sent; and I sense that much of what I think now about that plan for the future can be verified objectively by the many already-recorded facts that ISU holds. However, to date, I have not been privileged to the 'big picture' facts and I understand that without an objective basis, my thoughts are easily marginalized and easily dismissed.

All of those records! Big data! Let's offer it not only to me but to all those from whom you now request comments. Please, let's inform the thinking that you're asking for.

### **March 13**

The present strategic plan has 8 goals some of which seem quite related. Perhaps the goals could be recombined and the number reduced.

- Goals 1 and 2 seem very interrelated; both have to do with the value and power of design. Perhaps it would be best if they were combined.
- Goal 3 divided into two tactics, one for undergraduate and graduate programs and the other for research/outreach/extension programs. The first tactic pertains to students and their experience, the second to faculty and staff scholarship. Goals 4 and 6 divide in a similar manner. Maybe it would be better to cut the pie differently with one goal pertaining to students and another for faculty and staff.

So maybe the new goal set could include 5:

1. Value / power of design/planning/arts: collaborations to address local and global problems, support for scholarship/research/creative/outreach activities, broadcasting accomplishments.
2. Student experience and success: quality educational programs, success of all students (domestic, international, all backgrounds), safe/equitable/inclusive environment, access and affordability, climate, community college articulations
3. Faculty and staff satisfaction and success: climate, mentoring, support for advancement
4. Diversity, equity, inclusion, cultural competency
5. College resources: balance the budget and reconfigure the first floor.

### **March 17**

My responses to the Strategic Plan are directed at those goals and tactics that have not yet been fulfilled; I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

Goal 1.

Tactic a: annual charrette: Could one of the multidisciplinary options studios be identified annually for this event? We now have a robust number of studios that could provide a mechanism for this to be realized. One change to the tactic might be to change the wording to address the possibility that this moves across all disciplines in the course of the timeline of the plan. The Dubuque Central Avenue Corridor project currently underway with Jennifer Drinkwater and Lisa Bates is one example.

Tactic b: funding work that demonstrates the effectiveness of collaboration and diversity to drives innovation and creativity: Do the Fieldstead and Outreach Grants address this or do we need to have one additional funded opportunity in the mix?

Goal 2.

Tactic a. undergraduate Gen Ed courses on the value of design in society: ArtIS 201, Creative Visual Thinking, could be re-worked to incorporate a larger scope of design-related topics and assignments; this might best be accomplished with input from someone in LAS.

Goal 3.

Tactic a: strengthen teaching using assessments: Could peer evaluation of teaching be located here? At a minimum we should have peer evaluation of all tenure-eligible faculty.

### **March 21**

Goal 1: Reduce the administrative barriers to cross-listing inter-disciplinary courses

Goal 1 tactic b: Increase in funded studios. Increase in funded international travel studios.

Goal 2: Increase funded outreach studios / partnerships to conduct design work in Iowa (society)

Goal 3: Increase administrative support for outreach work: contracts, budgets, purchasing etc

Goal 4: Improve communications about opportunities and work to reduce scheduling conflicts for design faculty (often university events are during studio)

Goal 5 tactic a: Funding for international travel studios that are non-Western (Asia / Africa / South America)

Goal 6: and gender equity

Goal 7 tactic b: yes!

Goal 8 tactic b: yes

### **March 22**

- Page one on interoffice communication there is a spelling error:  
The revised plan should cover the "reminding" should be remaining.

- COD Goals and Tactics, number 5. could we add a global non-profit? Something like Habitat for Humanity International? Or are we focusing on experiences for college credit?

- Number 7. Can we add Design Camp or summer workshops? I have been struggling with the pay structure for summer faculty to teach summer camps or workshops. Under expanding communication I think we could interview each faculty member practicing their "art" and release them as educational short videos. If I was a student trying to decided where to go to school this could influence me if I saw the talent and glimpse of awesome personalities.

- Under University Key Performance Indicators number 5. Does full time employment include self employment? If it does not it should be considered or added as an option. COD in particular has a strong potential to create creative entrepreneurs.

- Under COD KPI's for Number 7. Should we develop a statewide gallery/exhibition space connected with Extension Outreach to get student work into rural/communities other than Ames?

- ISU Strategic Plan FY 2017-2022 Goal 3. Communication and Design is not included in the metric for Impact of ISU Extension and Outreach programs.

Otherwise great documents! Thank you for sharing!