

**CNR Staff Retreat
Commons Crest Room
July 6, 2011**

Present: Dean Kurt Pregitzer, Pam Bell, Steve Hollenhorst, Lynaire Banks, Lourana Swayne, Alison Weigley, Cheryl Chambers, Kim Osborne, Sue McMurray, Lori Mulalley, Candy Ihm, Lovina Roselle, Rose Poulin, Lynne Kittner, Reenie Arnold, Linda Kisha, Darrell Stout, Vanessa Dobbins, Debbie Rigby

Convened: 12:35 pm

Report from Dean Pregitzer: State of the College

It is my philosophy that communication is key. I've been here about one year, and the college is doing great. We have made progress in this year, but there is always room for improvement; which is why it's critical to continually evaluate where we are.

Pam and the finance team have worked hard over the past year to improve the college's financial position. We're in good shape and will close this year with a balanced budget. It's a complicated business with different facets. Our college is a \$20M a year operation; \$12M of which is research.

We have been thoughtful in hiring new faculty and staff. We just hired Kelly Wendland as faculty in the CSS Department, and she will join CNR this fall. I'd like to really stabilize our financial plan so we'll have the capacity to invest in our people through professional training. We want to create an atmosphere of collegiality where everyone is professional; mutual respect is very important.

It's also important to invest in our daily lives; the carpets will be replaced through the building as we can afford to do it. I value investing in our workplace and developing pride of ownership. We should be replacing staff computers on a routine basis. We will continue to make these investments with care to ensure stability.

Open Discussion: Questions for the Dean

Vanessa-Monthly staff training through online tutorials.

Kurt-Suggestions on how we can improve our practices are always welcomed.

Kurt-What's the computer situation?

Darrell-Jory ensures all staff computers are up-to-date; he just bought several computers for people in the college.

Darrell-What are the expectations of mail delivery, especially heavy packages? We used to email everyone to pick up the mail. There is a large table where we could put the boxes until they are picked up.

Kurt-The staff shouldn't be responsible for package delivery. We'll work together on a policy for mail/shipping. We can utilize the faculty/staff section on the website to list these policies.

Rose-I hear we are getting a new roof.

Kurt-We should look for suggestions on how to take care of the building. I've noticed that some of the plywood on the exterior of the building needs to be fixed.

Lovina-What is the status of the advising center?

Kurt- We are centralizing our student services for freshmen and sophomores. The Chairs unanimously approved this decision. We now have an administrative position open for a colleague of Lynaire's, and we are hiring a Director of Student Services We have outstanding pools for both positions. We hope to have a full team before the students return in the fall.

Lovina-Would that person also do recruitment and retention?

Kurt-Lynaire has been doing a fabulous job with that. It's a college responsibility to greet people with a smile, assist them, and have a student-friendly atmosphere.

Lynaire-We have all those student files in the Dean's office-it would be a good idea to move those into the student center while the new carpet is being installed in the dean's suite.

Steve-Do we need that much record storage space with the online records?

Lynaire-I keep articulation agreements and some student records. The storage facility in the Dean's office workroom is more historical records that could be archived in the SUB basement.

Kurt-We need to think of ways to make more efficient use our space.

Rose-What about having a work study student turn those old files into PDFs?

Kurt-That's a great idea!

Lynaire-I could consolidate a lot of that stuff. Maybe two of those cabinets could just go away.

Darrell-That would help. We would have to box some of that up anyway. Anything you could consolidate would be helpful.

Rose-The reading room/student lounge in the basement needs a makeover. The furniture needs to be replaced. Maybe we could ask for donations.

Kurt-We need someone to take the lead on that.

Pam-Oz may still have some furniture for students who come to school without anything.

Rose-I'll be willing to push that forward. Lovina is on the committee.

Kurt-I like the idea of engaging students in everything. They come in and ask me for money for trips, etc. I say ok but you need to give back to the college. That's the way to get the students engaged. E.g., "The Dean says we have \$\$\$, but you need to haul the old furniture to the dump."

Lynaire-We have seven really great undergraduates who applied for and were accepted as CNR ambassadors. They are excited about getting to work. They have reserved the SUB ballroom for Nov. 12th—not calling it a Forester's Ball but it will be similar.

Kurt-We have great students; let's find a way to get them involved.

Alison-The area on the first floor with the student club boards needs to be updated as well as the bulletin boards in the reading room.

Lynaire-SAC would actually do that and has representatives from all of the different clubs.

Kurt-We should have the student team in place by August 1st so we can interact and make this more student focused.

CNR Strategic Plan Introduction

Exercise 1. When we implemented the strategic plan we asked the faculty and staff to vote on our strategies. We numbered them sequentially so they correspond with the strategies. I would like you to work together in break out groups; take 5 minutes to identify 3 of the 40 strategies then take 25 minutes as a group to figure out specific ways to implement the strategies. Then report back to us. The admin team will use these suggestions to develop a plan of action.

Reports

Group 1 — Candy, Lynne, Cheryl and Lynaire

#18 Improve efficiency of internal practices to facilitate growth and development of scholarly activity.

Lynaire-We reiterated what was under Actions. We need a grant writer or workshops to help the faculty develop their ideas and a grant writer to type in the information so the faculty can move on to something else. Workshops would be like starboard, cradle to grave grants, for faculty; P-cards, travel accounts.

Kurt-How difficult was it to hold faculty workshop on P-cards?

Lynne-Not hard, just some basic how we do things, get their feet on the ground. Perhaps encouraging them to come might be problematic.

Darrell-We did that a couple of years ago when we had four new faculty. We went over things, showed them do's and don'ts. This could be beneficial for current faculty as well as new faculty.

Lovina- The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) has a great grant writer, Sarah Koeber, who is available to anyone, and she's really good. OSP does a series of training sessions that are great. We have Kim Osborne, who is a great resource for our college.

Kim-We could do a tutorial on the electronic proposal system; I would be willing to do that.

Kurt-The highest number for the faculty on the comparative analysis was 18. We've done this same exercise with the faculty that we have done here today. We need to have some workshops for the faculty. The more of these things we do together, we'll find ways to be more efficient and educate people; we'll learn by doing.

#24 Revise promotion and tenure guidelines to clarify the role and value of interdisciplinary research and scholarship.

Lynaire-Do faculty members earn credit for advising interdisciplinary students or teaching interdisciplinary classes? If they teach integrated seminar, is their department penalized because they can't teach a forestry class?

Kurt-I'm not sure that's accurate. In fact, the faculty need to develop a position description every year, and their interdisciplinary teaching is on that position description. There are ways in which we formally engage and account for faculty involvement.

#13 Allocate time, facilitation and support to help increase faculty participation in competitive grants, and create incentives to increase their scholarly impact.

Lynaire-One idea is to replace overhead returns to faculty to participate in international grants.

Kurt-The leadership team has a task force working on an indirect costs distribution model.

Group 2— Alison, Linda, Debbie, Vanessa, and Lovina

#38 Continually evaluate existing staff responsibilities and workloads to provide efficient, quality service to our community.

Alison-We can contribute by developing a desk reference of how we do our jobs and share ideas at staff support meetings. We can utilize websites to house college forms, etc., and we could develop a CNR calendar with dates and deadlines. We should also develop a set time and date for the CNR staff meeting so we can block it out on our calendars in advance to maximize participation.

Kurt-The calendar idea is a really good idea. After it's created, we can revise it every year and include just the major things, like registration and advising dates.

#34 Support and encourage both formal and informal activities that cultivate positive relationships and behaviors among faculty, staff and students within the CNR community.

Alison-We suggest a once or twice a year CNR faculty and staff meeting to discuss issues and event, and to also host holiday parties where we can get to know one another.

#35 Create a culture of tolerance, mutual respect and celebrate the diversity of scholarship, outreach, teaching and service.

Have a potluck and bring and dishes to share.

Group #3— Sue, Rose, Kim, and Pam**#2 Use development strategies to support and enhance academic programs, particularly field studies and experiential learning; improve classroom facilities and teaching technology.**

Sue-Create a challenge to targeted donors/alumni for a monetary match for a scholarship, facility upgrade or event, etc.

-Engage donors to provide financial support for academic programs or projects, for example, donors could pay for a video project that would enhance recruiting efforts for a specific academic program.

-Create “foyer of excellence” where donors could buy a step and have their names engraved in it, modeled after the staircase in the Commons. Funds could go to academic or outreach programs.

-Sell names of meeting rooms to donors or alums.

-Develop a fundraiser for new picnic tables or benches to improve our deck areas or student lounge. Get student clubs to make furniture or get donations to purchase furniture. Suggest enlisting a retired faculty member or dean to spearhead fundraising.

-All of these could be featured in the magazine or as a web feature.

#35 Create a culture of tolerance, mutual respect and celebrate the diversity of scholarship, outreach, teaching and service.

Sue-Start a staff mentoring group and include a trusted faculty mentor for input on issues of communication, tolerance and respect.

-Develop email criteria to teach people college-wide how to set a positive tone in email communications and develop an awareness of how emails are interpreted.

#11 Reinvigorate the CNR Student Affairs Council (SAC) and support the student clubs and the Living and Learning Center (CNR House).

Sue--Designate engaged staff and faculty members to lead and mentor student club leaders. Suggest new director of student services would be best fit.

Group #4 — Lourana, Darrell, Reenie, Lori, and Steve**#34 Support and encourage both formal and informal activities that cultivate positive relationships and behaviors among faculty, staff and students within the CNR community.**

Reenie-We agreed that we do this pretty well. We focused on how to get students involved. Encourage students to attend CNR events. Faculty use access to students email to notify them, “We are having something, can you come?” Raffle tickets for something that was donated.

#35 Create a culture of tolerance, mutual respect and celebrate the diversity of scholarship, outreach, teaching and service.

Reenie-We can make a concentrated effort of reaching out to multi-culture clubs across campus. Send them a calendar of our events. Cultural potluck maybe once a month or every six months.

#38 Continually evaluate existing staff responsibilities and workloads to provide efficient, quality service to our community.

Reenie-We could have a permanent item at our staff meeting where someone may ask for help.

BREAK

Exercise 2- Opportunities for Improving Practices & Promoting Professional Growth.

Group 4-Sue, Darrel, Pam, Lynne, Debbie—

- Issue: Need for quiet areas in the Dean’s Office, fiscal office, and academic areas.

- Solution: Keep that back door of Dean's Office locked.
- Solution: Develop/designate rooms or areas in the building that are "quiet areas."
- Issue: People won't use a drop basket for the fiscal office. They want to hand it to a person, which is disruptive.
 - Solution: The office could close early for a quiet time, or have a mail slot, or remove the signs with their names so people will stop at front desk.
- Issue: New signage and directories for the college.
 - Solution: Pass around the old directory to the departments for updates then have Brenda McGuire get signs made with Creative Services.
- Issue: CNR banquet needs a designated leader chosen now, so work may begin in the fall. And what they are in charge of, specifically? All award recipients should be chosen by January.
- Issue: We need to have a clear backup plan for when people are gone. Who will take care of it? Who's the go-to person? That's not clear now.

Group 3-Rose, Lourana, Kim, Steve—

We focused on our processes and practices and discussed those that had improved and how, and those that gave us opportunity for improvement.

- We went back to the calendar, and when things are due.
- A college handbook on the web for new and returning faculty, staff and students.
- The travel system was designed for the individual to put information into the form, but the fiscal office does it now. CNR has the Etrips system for the college travel authorizations which are all signed electronically, but the CNR program does not interface with the UI travel web. The UI travel web has an optional authorization form for each trip, but it requires hardcopy signatures.

Kurt-Why can't we develop a PDF to do that?

Steve-Why not have a web-based training system?

Lynne-I would like to see the E-Trips tied to the university system so it self-populates ... the two systems don't talk to each other right now.

Rose-We also agreed the purchasing card is working better, getting the receipts in. We also talked about the motor pool. Picking up the keys at the desk upstairs is working well. Another issue is the time-entry system, especially for off-campus people. We no longer have time keepers, but the fiscal staff is in the middle if people don't turn in their time cards.

Kurt-This problem deserves a discussion with Michael Coleman who is part of HR and Payroll. We need to capture these issues and meet with him again. We've had a couple of meetings with him about how HR is handled on campus. He's interested in making improvements.

Group 2-Lori, Candy, Vanessa, Linda—

We echoed what group 4 talked about. We would like an in-service day, one day a month when the fiscal office is closed so they can get caught up.

Kurt-Pam will you help implement this? Check to make sure they can do this?

Vanessa-I looked at getting a glass door for the fiscal office. Because it has to be a fire door the cost was \$1700.

Kurt-A solid door is not a good message.

Vanessa-It would help keep noise down and the cold air in the winter out.

- The Fire Doors on the main hallways need a sign saying "rooms xxx are down this hall".
- We need signage next to elevators to direct people, possibly a building map.
- Beautifying the college: elevator stop by the Herbarium needs some attention.

- We need more Smartboards in the conference rooms.

Kurt-There's probably a way to update our small meeting spaces. We need at least 3 small conference rooms with telephone access for telephone conference calls.

Group 1-Cheryl, Lynaire, Alison, Reenie, Lovina—

- The fiscal office needs office closure dates close to end of fiscal year. Communicate those dates so people will know in advance.
- Fiscal office also needs storage space.
- There needs to be a better way to scan documents quickly. Easy access to a scanner.
- Need for a new copier in the Dean's Office.
- Front desk coverage in Dean's office, hire a student or work-study.

Kurt- We should utilize students more. Students need the work, and when trained, they can work out well. I want to know if it isn't working.

Kurt- We are trying to get these things done, so we'll report back to you on the meeting summary and if you have any corrections, we'll refine them. We'll then have an assessment project. We'll try to report out to you about the things that have been accomplished so you have a vehicle how to tell us on how to make things better. Then we'll learn how to improve things.

Adjourned: 3:50 pm