

The meeting began with two administrative items:

- There was an update from Angela Wilhelms on two outstanding questions for the president and provost. First was that they are open to the task force hiring a third-party consultant, for lack of a better term, at this point, to help gather information about best practices, other university structures, or general data on the topic of organizing institutions. Second was that they are fine with an extended time frame that gives the task force into May to issue its report. Given that this is so late in the academic year, any recommendations or discussions between them and the faculty about possible next steps would be postponed until fall 2019. This should not impact the overall timeline for searching for a new dean or deans, which would likely begin in earnest in December 2019 (prep) and January 2020 (launch).
- Karen Ford informed the group that she would be attending the February 13 University Senate meeting to discuss the task force's work with the Senate and invited anyone who was able to attend.

Karen noted that the goal of today's meeting is to identify and get people assigned to working groups to help dig into analyzing the questions. After a brief discussion to ensure the task force was in agreement, five groups were identified and members assigned.

1. Research
 - a. Elliot Berkman
 - b. Bruce McGough
 - c. Gabe Paquette
 - d. Richard Taylor
2. Teaching
 - a. Tina Boscha
 - b. Pedro Garcia-Caro
 - c. Mike Price
 - d. Christiana Sewall
3. Internal impacts / relationships
 - a. Frances White
 - b. Ben Brinkley
 - c. Tyrone Russ
 - d. Rocío Zambrana
4. External impacts / relationships
 - a. Monica Guy
 - b. Craig Parsons
 - c. Janelle Stevenson
 - d. Joe Sventek
5. Structures and funding
 - a. Melissa Bowers
 - b. Spike Gildea
 - c. Juan-Carlos Modella
 - d. Brad Shelton

6. Writing Group (will ultimately focus on writing the report). As of this discussion, this group includes:
 - a. Karen Ford
 - b. Pedro García-Caro
 - c. Betsy McClendon
 - d. Bruce McGough
 - e. Teri Rowe

For work of the groups, it was agreed that each group would take notes and record activity in its own style, but prepare a summary for the whole task force two days in advance of the meeting at which the group is to report on its activities. Future task force meetings—two hours each—would include a 90-minute dive into one particular group with the remaining 30 minutes reserved for short, round-robin updates from the other work groups.

The task force moved into a discussion of the UO's 2015 strategic framework document. Various points were raised in response to that, as well as to a 2017 vision document by the previous CAS dean.

- The 2017 CAS vision statement reads more like what would come from a provost, and it did not appear that it was specifically unique to how CAS supports the liberal arts. It was also observed that it could—with just a few edits—apply to many of the other schools and colleges and didn't really seem to capture the goal, role or focus of CAS in particular.
- There was discussion of the instinct (including in these documents) to cleave liberal arts *from* the sciences rather than thinking about them holistically. It was noted that different universities handle this differently and the term "liberal arts" is sometimes a colloquial term for humanities and social sciences.
- There are not clear lines between what we traditionally think of as "liberal arts" and the sciences. It makes clarity around the organizational purpose of a school difficult to define, or sometimes results in misappropriating traits. This is also related to the historical use and definition of the term.
- Modern interpretations sometimes ascribe the term "liberal arts" to a politically motivated educational efforts.
- Something we have to consider is the economic reality of what students face today versus what those in faculty or staff ranks faced. This is particularly true with regard to how students think about the value proposition of a degree in certain areas.
- There was general sentiment that the group believes strongly in the value of the liberal arts role and purpose of the institution.
- There was some opposition to the notion that we do any of this solely for a marketing purpose.
- Interdisciplinary work was discussed, using examples of more traditionally technical disciplines (e.g., materials science) working collaboratively with other disciplines.
- There were examples of how size can sometimes cause different departments to recognize different benefits, particularly when you have—for example—one college development office focused on other units.
- How well does interdisciplinary work manifest across schools and colleges? Is it an actual benefit being in one college, or is it a perceived benefit because that's the reality? Does the new budget model help break down these barriers? Examples of current collaborations between CAS and professional schools were provided.

- It was noted that researcher networks/committees have discussed the difficulty of having such a large (and more importantly, broad) college as it pertains to focus, vision, and more specifically the communication related to those two items.
- We are already good at working together, and at working with limited resources. Perhaps we should think about this from next level down (e.g., specific fundraising, recruiting faculty) and see if size and scope impacts the ability to do those things.
- There was some discussion about the current role of the divisional deans vis a vis other deans, and the size of the CAS divisions relative to the other schools and colleges. The divisional deans currently function much like deans of individual colleges except in not having a central fundraising function. And, ultimately, the CAS dean has authority over budgets, policies, and personnel even though he works collaboratively with the divisional deans.

The task force moved to a discussion of the first survey question and advancing to the second question. Karen asked whether the next question should follow those articulated by the president and provost in December, or go a different direction. The group brainstormed ideas such as:

- What structure(s) make sense to support student success
- What structure(s) would enhance your work or department, regardless of what is best for students
- What does “liberal arts” mean and is there another term for it
- What is the purpose of CAS
- Why do you think the president seated the task force

The group discussed whether to post survey results online with a summary document included. They noted that some of the comments are not constructive, but that it is generally good to be transparent and show the information as received (censoring for extremely foul language). They also discussed that while it is helpful to ensure everyone’s voice is heard and that it can be useful to know how other people responded, it may also provide some level of distrust in faculty participation or perspectives. There was general agreement that a summary document would be provided to capture general themes and less content-specific commentary, and then follow that with a compendium of the content-specific comments most productive to the conversation. Karen tasked the writing group (above) with this assignment.