CAS Task Force
Meeting Notes | April 30, 2019

Dean Ford opened the conversation with an overview of how the writing group's work is progressing. She noted that they have copies of all the documents and reports from various work groups and are working on an overall report. The draft report will be sent to task force members in advance of the May 15 meeting with the expectation that individuals read the draft *prior to* the meeting so they are ready to discuss it at the meeting. The goal is to submit a final report to the president and provost (with public posting on the website) during the latter part of the week of May 20. Ford also noted the intent to have one final meeting in late May with the president to discuss the report, particularly any questions he has or areas he wants to more thoroughly understand after reviewing it.

The presenting work group focused on external structures (i.e., other institutions' structures) provided an overview of their work to the task force. Their review focused on what other AAU institutions do. Two-thirds of the comparator institutions have a structure similar to CAS, though some have separated smaller component parts (e.g., Chemistry was split off at Berkeley). They noted that one reason CAS may feel so large here is because the UO overall is so small; so it may be more relative.

One possibility that was presented is the addition of a school (or schools) within CAS (as opposed to splitting CAS or new colleges/schools external to CAS); perhaps this could provide more focused attention on identified areas. It was noted that this could result in some of the benefits around focus articulated in rationales for splitting CAS into narrower-units, but it was also noted that this would create more administrative structure and layers within the College.

The group looked specifically at administrative structures within CAS that would support innovation and interdisciplinarity. They provided examples from other AAU research universities and noted that there was a wide variety of structures. The group did provide an example of SUNY Buffalo's College of Arts and Sciences, which has centers and institutes internal to the College. There was some discussion about what is a center vs. an institute vs. a program, and some discussion about how CAS—and others schools—ought to work in alignment with the VPRI but that there is some confusion at the UO about roles and responsibilities.

The group also discussed the use of a strategic planning process with CAS to support excellence, looking at examples from a number of AAU peer institutions and providing the information as context for an idea that might work for CAS at the UO. An example they shared was Rutgers University's College of Arts and Sciences, noting that there was no "right" approach but that this was an area the UO's College could do more in.

The group posed the idea of starting a collaborative strategic planning process that supports excellence interdisciplinarity and innovation within CAS – and suggested doing so before the launch of a search for, or at least the hire of, a new dean. The Task Force discussed the chicken-egg nature of strategic planning, particularly in light of changing leadership, and the need for both college-level planning and vision, but also departmental ("bottom up") planning and vision. Members of the Task Force also discussed nuances around strategic planning processes and how they best instill a culture of change, progress and forward movement; this was done with a goal of trying to identify a possible planning process for CAS. There was also discussion of strategic "plans" per se compared to vision statements or statements of principles.

It was also noted that this task force is likely not the right place to develop such a plan or recommendation because it extends beyond the charge and likely requires the work of another body thinking longer and harder on that particular question. Though there was support for the Task Force including, in its report to the president and provost, a note that this type of thinking and work may be something CAS should undertake.

Several different issues were put on the table for discussion in the context of planning: the value of shared principles, shared understanding of *why* the process is necessary to begin with, the use of resources to incentivize outcomes, the ability to use a properly structured process to galvanize participants and affected parties, the role and value of dissent, and others.

There was also some discussion about the role a planning process can play in administrative prioritization (e.g., Which IT projects do we focus on?) and providing staff with a sense of understanding about what to do with new (good) ideas – how to vet them, implement them, sustain them? This was highlighted against the practice at the UO of individuals working in a scrappy, low- or non-resourced, and sometimes isolated way to launch or grow new idea.