

February 1, 2016

Dear colleagues,

Last week was a busy one for strategic planning. On Monday, more than 80 faculty, staff and students convened for the first Town Hall Meeting. The purpose of this session was to provide a brief overview of the Key Question Committee reports and begin a campus-wide discussion on the best way to utilize our resources to advance our university.

As I indicated in my opening comments, the new strategic plan has four main purposes:

- Solidifying the progress made during the past eight years;
- Ensuring continued growth;
- Addressing some key areas where the University faces ongoing challenges (primarily in the areas of student success and diversifying the faculty and staff); and
- Building upon areas of distinction and excellence.

As we move forward in our planning, there are also some general assumptions we must make to ground our plans in reality. These include:

- Money is going to be tight. Appropriations are unlikely to grow, and tuition increases will be at or below inflation.
- Growing enrollment by looking at new markets (non-traditional adult students, distance programs, etc.) and understanding the changing demographics and numbers of new high school graduates will be essential.
- Any growth in employees must be critically reviewed due to budgetary constraints.

Overall, the group expressed a strong interest in embracing diversity and inclusive excellence as a unifying strength across our campus. Several mentioned the need to ensure that the new strategic plan has diversity strategies and initiatives embedded throughout each area.

Tying university priorities and professional expectations to our hiring practices, employee evaluations and promotion and tenure procedures was also expressed.

The need to grow distance education programs was acknowledged but concern was expressed on whether there is sufficient student support available to online students.

Lastly, concern was also expressed about ensuring that there is sufficient support to be effective in continuing to grow enrollments, improving student success, providing faculty support, and meeting all workload expectations.

It was also interesting to realize the things that didn't surface in the discussion. There was no debate on our current goals which are likely to be quite similar in our new plan. Furthermore, there was no concern expressed about increasing our admissions standards as a panacea for addressing retention and graduation. The town hall participants seemed to recognize the important role Indiana State plays in the state's public higher education system and its significance in improving our state's economy and overall quality of life.

The first Town Hall meeting also yielded some creative ideas, some of which will likely surface in the strategic plan as initiatives as they are developed later this year.

On Thursday, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee met to review the feedback from the Town Hall meeting to help guide its work in developing the goal statements and benchmarks for the new plan. The group also reviewed a recommendation to add a preamble statement to the University's current mission plan. The version reflecting their input is:

New draft preamble:

Indiana State is dedicated to teaching and the creation of knowledge and to maintaining a longstanding commitment to diversity, inclusion, and access to higher education.

Mission statement (same as current):

Indiana State University combines a tradition of strong undergraduate and graduate education with a focus on community and public service. We integrate teaching, research, and creative activity in an engaging, challenging, and supportive learning environment to prepare productive citizens for Indiana and the world.

Moving forward, the Steering Committee expressed interest in continuing to utilize community engagement and experiential learning as part of the university's strategic philosophy with the added component of career/life readiness. An underlying theme across all areas of the strategic planning would be to embrace diversity of thought (which may apply to race, gender, beliefs, sexual orientation, etc.) as a unifying strength.

The Steering Committee also worked on drafting goal statements for the new plan. At this point, the draft statements are:

Goal 1: Student Success – Support students in achieving their educational goals while increasing the number of students taking advantage of the educational opportunities at Indiana State.

Goal 2: Experiential Learning and Career/Life Readiness – Provide all students with opportunities to engage in experiential learning connected to their major and to obtain the skills and knowledge needed for today's workforce.

Goal 3: Community Engagement – Serve as a national model for impacting the quality of life in our communities by encouraging students, faculty, and staff to be engaged and productive citizens.

Goal 4: Distinctive Programs – Strengthen, leverage and develop distinctive academic programs to provide unique experiences to our students and bring greater prominence to the University overall.

Goal 5: Resources and Institutional Effectiveness -- Improve utilization of university resources while expanding and diversifying revenues.

Goal 6: Employee Success – Enhance the University's ability to recruit and retain great faculty and staff in order to realize its goals and fulfill its mission.

Your input into these draft goal statements and the recommended addition to our mission statement is needed. Please participate in the next Strategic Planning Town Hall Meeting from 1 to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, February 9th, in HMSU Dede I. If you cannot attend, please send your feedback to Provost Licari at mike.licari@indstate.edu. I hope that we can have some discussion at next week's meeting on potential benchmarks for our goals.

Provost Licari will be appointing task force groups for each goal area to begin defining the benchmarks that will be utilized to measure progress. If you are interested in serving on a particular task force, please let him know.

This has been a good start with several hundred individuals already engaged in this important work. I would like to thank everyone who served on the Key Question Committees and all of those who attended our meetings last week. This is only the beginning, and I am excited to see where this will take us.

Accountability is an important part of our strategic planning success. On Wednesday, February 10, there will be a report out session on the Unbounded Possibilities program which falls under the current plan's goal 4. The report out will take place from 1 to 4 p.m. in Dede III. Please plan to attend and hear an update on the UP projects.

Other items I would like to share:

- Congratulations to the students of Kappa Alpha Psi for their efforts to help those impacted by the Flint, Michigan, water crisis. The group, which is advised by alumnus Claude Grimes, is collecting bottled water and cash donations which will be given to the Flint Community Schools. The fraternity has adopted "Be the change you want to see" as its motto. They will have a table across from the information desk in HMSU to accept donations throughout this week. If you miss them in the Commons and would like to donate, contact Armon Harris, president of the fraternity, at aharris56@sycamores.indstate.edu.
- A short survey will be administered to all students this semester to gather their feelings regarding the climate at Indiana State. The survey will be administered through the same system used for student evaluations. Please encourage your students to participate.
- Last month, Cheri and I attended alumni receptions in Pensacola, Orlando, Tampa, Sarasota, and Naples in conjunction with the Foundation's annual meeting. These events were well attended, and our alumni, emeriti and friends who live in Florida were excited to hear about the good things happening at Indiana State. I would like to thank the generous alumni and donors who hosted these events – Bev Spear, Jerry and Betty Quick, Norm and Linda Pellegrini, Nancee Sorenson, John

Kackley, Jay McHargue, and Roger and Glenda Schorr. In addition to these alumni events, Tom and Sandy Druley hosted the Foundation Board for a reception in their home. The Foundation and Alumni Association did a great job organizing the packed week of events and individual meetings.

- On Saturday, the second day of interviews for the prestigious Presidential Scholars was completed. I would like to express my appreciation to the faculty, staff and alumni who volunteered to help with these interviews. The impressive group of students came from as far as Oregon and Virginia to interview for the full-ride scholarship.
- The College of Graduate and Professional Studies will host its second Diversity Coffee Chat this Wednesday from 9 to 10:30 a.m. in HMSU 222. The first chat drew 28 participants with faculty from the Bayh College of Education, the College of Health and Human Services and the College of Arts and Sciences participating. The group worked to identify issues related to diversity that graduate students are facing and developed several action items for possible inclusion in the new strategic plan. Thanks to Dean Lynn Maurer for organizing this proactive discussion.
- The Presidential election cycle officially kicks off in Iowa today. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to be engaged citizens and vote in this year's local, state and federal elections. The American Democracy Project is currently working to get individuals registered. For more information on registering to vote and to receive election updates and reminders, go to: <https://indstate.turbovote.org/register>
- The Faculty Senate, the Faculty Center for Teaching Excellence, the Office of Student Success, and the Cunningham Memorial Library are cosponsoring a workshop on Feb. 12 entitled, "Facilitating Challenging Conversations in the Classroom." The workshop will take place from 9 to 1 p.m. and includes lunch. To attend, please RSVP by February 10 at: https://indstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cvuDs91VImBtP5X.
- Indiana State has been recognized as one of the top volunteer organizations for Griffin Bike Park during 2015. ISU students, faculty and staff provided 633 volunteer hours to the development of this new recreational area. The group has big plans for 2016, so keep up the good work!

Have a great week!

Sincerely,
Daniel J. Bradley
President