

## **Provost's Preface:**

Over the fall semester, President Rochon's listening sessions provided valuable opportunities for everyone in the IC community to engage in discussions about our mutual goal – enhancing the academic enterprise of the College. You can read the results of the listening sessions on the President's web pages.

As the listening sessions concluded, the deans and vice presidents began the process of analyzing the outcomes and synthesizing the comments into what the president had characterized as "six to eight" possible initiatives. We worked diligently to achieve that goal, at one point dividing the comments into categories, and forming teams to discuss each category. As we returned to the discussion table, we began to have a much more exciting discussion that synthesized those possible initiatives into one broader initiative: building naturally on the excellence that already exists here at Ithaca College to nurture a distinctive new culture of academic rigor, challenge, and achievement.

We recognized that the 'new culture' we were envisioning must make the best possible use of a key institutional asset: our very identity as a comprehensive college, characterized by outstanding individual programs. We discussed the many ways that this had been attempted in the past, and identified a variety of roadblocks that had kept these efforts from succeeding in prior years.

During this process, our vision moved away from 6-8 separate initiatives, toward a more specific focus on the curriculum itself, particularly the elements which are innovative, comprehensive, inter- and multi-disciplinary. While immediately acknowledging that those words certainly describe the IC experience for many of our students, we also noted that this creative, integrative approach does not yet fully pervade our institutional culture or serve as a college-wide distinguishing characteristic. Taking these efforts to a broader and deeper level of implementation has the potential to attract large numbers of exceptional students to Ithaca, students attracted by the opportunity to have a uniquely rich and multi-faceted educational experience here.

We realized that the visioning exercise, led by the comments gathered from all college constituencies, was now leading toward a new look at our entire learning experience, and would have major implications for our programs and curricula. All of the deans and the vice-presidents recognized that realizing any such vision must fully involve the faculty. So, on behalf of the college leadership, I bring the results of the visioning process back to the faculty. I invite faculty participation in defining this strategic goal, in considering the needs of faculty and students, in including the best of previous attempts or successes, and in planning our next steps. After first consideration by the faculty, resulting in a more refined and detailed vision for implementing this idea at Ithaca College, I expect to involve other segments of the campus in additional discussions, bringing in students, staff, and student affairs personnel. .

Elsewhere on this website, you will find additional documents presenting thoughts and ideas from the leadership group. Some come from our discussions, and some are adapted from various preliminary working documents that supported our discussions. In offering this material, I must credit the work of Deans Dianne Lynch and Leslie Lewis, and the input of all the deans and vice presidents. I offer these documents not as a plan or as a definitive statement, but in a spirit of helpfulness and support for our future work together. The concepts explored in these documents are in need of examination, enhancement, and enrichment by the most important participants in any academic plan – the faculty. I hope you agree that these are exciting ideas – some new, some building on things IC already does or has desired to do. I hope you will join me in creating a new strategic vision and a new future for Ithaca College.