

Introduction

Strategic planning is an exercise in designing for the future that is informed by our mission and values, by our opportunities and challenges, and by our capacity and resources. Strategic planning allows us to identify and take advantage of our strengths, and to align our core values and purpose as an educational institution with those strengths and abilities. Strategic planning also allows us to ask the question “Who do we want to be?” and to then to engage in a focused, collaborative process of discussion and decision making about how we can achieve these goals and aspirations for ourselves. It is a process of grounded, realistic assessment of what we do, and where we can go, given the resources we have and can develop.

The components of our strategic plan include:

1. An assessment of the current organizational landscape and the external context of the college
2. The development of a guiding mission, vision and statement of values for the college, with a clear definition of the relationships between them
3. The definition of a small number of high level themes that are important to achieve this vision
4. The development of strategies that pull the college together to support success in the themes
5. The development of goals and objectives, the outcomes that define the successful process and the establishment of metrics against which to measure the success of the plan

At base, our strategic planning process will allow us to ask ourselves what our future looks like, and how Ithaca College wants to shape itself to meet the educational and institutional needs of the coming years.

Planning Principles

We have designed this process to meet the needs and desires of the Ithaca College community. A series of focus groups with a broad range of campus leadership groups in the Spring of 2018 specifically addressed the question of the characteristics the campus community would like to see in the strategic planning process. A series of principles arose out of these conversations that became the foundational elements of the design of the plan. Over the summer 2018, a design team developed the plan you see below to achieve the following:

- Create meaningful opportunities to contribute
- Proactively solicit participation from everyone – including voices that have not historically been represented
- Establish a transparent process

- Ensure that participants see their input reflected at all stages of the process
- Empower participants to think boldly

Our goals are to make sure that everyone who wants to be part of the planning process has an opportunity to do so, that it is clear how the planning groups arrived at the outcomes of the process, and that it is clear how the outcomes of the process connect with the input and feedback from the college community.

The structure of this plan is as follows:

Steering Committee

The Steering committee is charged with coordinating the overall activities of the Strategic Planning Process.

The Steering Committee, will have 12-15 members representing in some configuration the following constituencies and stakeholders:

- Provost (Chair, to co-chair with chair of the Design Team)
- 1 Vice President (in addition to Provost)
- 3 Faculty Members
- 2 Staff Members
- 2 Students
- 1 Student Affairs and Campus Life Representative
- 1 Alum
- 2 Trustees
- 1 Community Member

Among the members of the Steering Committee, it is important to have people who have a commitment to the design principles as well as sufficient legitimacy with the campus community to work through potentially difficult (but hopefully ultimately empowering) conversations about making choices as a community. The Steering Committee will also help to set the tone of collaborative responsibility within the Working Groups, and across the campus as the primary ambassadors of the Strategic Planning process.

The members of the Steering Committee will be chosen by the President and the co-chairs of the Steering Committee from among a pool of individuals. There will be a variety of nomination opportunities designed to access the largest array of possible participants in the process. Individuals will be able to self-nominate, or nominate another member of the campus community, through the Strategic Planning website. The Design Team encourages everyone to activate their personal networks to help reach those members of the community who typically might not step forward. The Steering Committee co-chairs will also reach out to the governance councils and other campus bodies for names of potential nominees.

There are three main aims of the work of the Steering Committee.

1. The Steering Committee (SC) will assess the relevance of the current college mission and vision statements, and draft new guiding vision, mission and values statements that are in close alignment and that will help structure the Strategic Planning Process. The SC will examine previous campus self-study and reflective exercises (Appendix 1) to inform their work in drafting these new statements.
2. The SC will develop a set of high level themes that will become the basis and topics of the working groups. These themes will arise out of the assessment in step 1 above, along with feedback from the IC community broadly defined, and an evaluation of the identifiable opportunities and issues facing IC and higher education in the future. The work of the SC should show evidence of having reviewed these previous campus efforts and of having incorporated relevant insights from this work.
3. The SC will form, recruit and populate the Working Groups that will produce the goals and objectives of the planning process. The SC will utilize the college governance structure (for faculty, staff and students) and other resources (for instance Paula Younger and Eric Rosario for community member) to identify the relevant stakeholders who have expertise in and/or commitment to the themes in collaboration with the President and the Provost.

The Steering Committee is responsible for ensuring the timely progress and completion of the Strategic Planning process. The SC is also responsible for communicating with the IC community on a schedule defined in the communications plan, and for seeking advice and counsel from the Strategic Planning Partners (see below).

The SC will be responsible for producing the final report of the planning process. That report should be very explicit regarding how the groups working as part of the planning process got to their results. The report of the results and the writing of the plan should take into consideration the many audiences within the IC community, on campus and off.

The final product of the strategic planning process will include:

- Guiding Vision, Mission and Values Statements
- Strategic Themes
- Goals (the destinations at which we hope to arrive)
- Objectives (the measurable steps we take to get to those destinations)
- An Implementation Plan
- A team of individuals that will be responsible for guiding implementation, and ongoing strategic reflection about the plan in the context of a dynamic institutional and higher education environment

Working Groups

The Working Groups are separate working committees associated with each of the themes identified by the SC. The groups are co-chaired by a faculty member and a staff member (or potentially a student and a staff member as appropriate to the task and personnel). At least one of the co-chairs of the group will be a permanent member of the steering committee.

The Working Groups are composed of 6-8 additional members of the community preferably a mix of faculty, staff, students and relevant stakeholders. The Steering Committee will seek out nominees, and will shape the committees with reference both to necessary expertise and demonstrated interest of the individual. The members should also have a stake in the area of focus.

To optimize engagement and promote empowerment among the members of the group, the Working Groups should have ownership of their theme, and be responsible for creating opportunities for campus engagement. The Working Groups will choose the channels, frequency, and mechanisms for collecting input. The groups will be responsible for scheduling these events, and collecting and organizing all feedback.

The Design Team recommends basic ground rules (Appendix 3) for all events run by the Working Groups to encourage robust feedback for event participants. The groups are responsible for identifying and reaching out to key stakeholders (see Appendix 2 for a provisional list) in advance of events, keeping track of those campus members who attended in order to report out with an official response, and explanations of how event feedback was considered and used (or not used). Ideally, the events will be engaging for the participants (outside speakers, for example, or interactive activities), and attendance will be high.

There may also be opportunity for the Working Groups to travel to institutions to observe and learn about positive examples of the work that the IC groups are working on. If travel is not an option, teleconferencing could be useful tool for connecting with outside resources.

The co-chairs of each working committee will meet routinely with the SC and the members of the Strategic Planning Core.

The Working Groups are responsible for the formation of the Goals and Objectives that will become the major results of the Strategic Planning process. The groups will examine relevant sections of existing school strategic plans and other campus documents, and perform an environmental scan and SWOT analyses.

The Working Groups can use a wide array of modalities to arrive at these results, and will consider the variety of ways to collect feedback from many different sources (web surveys, focus groups, easels on campus, etc.), and the best ways to catalog, standardize and analyze for their purposes the data being generated.

Examples of the work product of these groups appear in Tables 2 and 3 of the accompanying visual representation of the planning process.

Strategic Planning Partners

The Strategic Planning Partners are a group of delegates from across the college community (faculty, staff, students and others) who will meet with the SC and Working Groups at scheduled, key points in the planning process to provide feedback and critique of the evolving strategic plan. This group provides a mechanism for ongoing conversation between the participants in the planning process and representatives from a cross section of the community, especially those people who do not feel adequately represented through existing governance processes. It also provides a mechanism to increase participation in and increased ownership of the planning process and outcomes.

The membership of the Strategic Planning Partner groups will be:

- Tri-Council (governance council executive committees)
 - Faculty
 - Staff
 - Student
- Strategic planning delegates to be chosen by the President and Provost
- Senior Leadership Team
- Board of Trustees

Consultants Group

The Consultants Group is made up of representatives from key stakeholders within the IC community, who will be involved in executing the final strategic plan. Given their central import to the final implementation of the plan that is devised, these individuals will serve two functions: they will provide advice and guidance on the development of the goals and objectives arising from the Working Groups and they will evaluate/validate the feasibility of the plan objectives and goals.

- Facilities
- Budget/Financial
- IEBC
- IT
- HR
- Legal
- Advancement
- Analytics and Institutional Research
- Enrollment Management
- Student Affairs and Campus Life

- Marketing
- OIPES
- Library
- External National Experts
- Auxiliary Services
- Etc.

The members of the Consultants Group will be chosen by the President and Provost.

Services Group

The Services Group will provide key operational support services to the planning process, as necessary and as requested by the Steering Committee and Working Groups. These individuals will be necessary at various points in the timeline of the planning process, but will be identified and assigned roles from the outset.

- Website manager
- Survey Design and Deployment
- Advertising
 - Social Media (esp. important for students)
- Graphics and Design for Reports and Publications
- Video Production
 - What is Strategic Planning and Why is it Important?
- Event Planning
 - Kickoff
 - Off Campus/Alumni/Community Events
 - Final Reveal
- A writer for continuity of final report
 - Last stages of process

The Provost and SLT will make assignments and allocate time within the work schedules of these support personnel.

Table 1 of the accompanying visual representation of the planning process summarizes the committee structure described above.

Approval Structure

Please see Table 4 of the accompanying visual representation of the planning process.

Calendar

Please see Table 5 of the accompanying visual representation of the planning process for a preliminary timeline events. A full calendar and communication plan is still under development.

Appendix 1: Resources for Examination of Previous Campus Work

The Steering Committee will review the results of large scale campus reflective efforts as inputs to inform the formation of the guiding mission and vision statements, as well as the formation of the themes that will form the basis of the working groups. The work of the steering committee and the overall planning groups should show evidence of having reviewed these efforts and incorporated relevant insights from these works. These reports will be made available to the planning team, and key authors of the reports could be invited to present findings from their work tailored to the needs of the planning team.

- i. School Strategic Plans
- ii. Middle States report (including the Visiting Team's final report)
- iii. Spring 2018 Planning Focus Group Data
- iv. Student Success and Strategic Retention Plan
- v. 125th Wishes for IC
- vi. Campus Master Plan
- vii. Sibson Consulting final report (still pending) – detailed staff salary benchmarking study
- viii. Shared Governance report (or is it still a series of recommendations?)
- ix. Campus Climate Survey – Report on Findings
- x. Campus Safety Report
- xi. Campaign Feasibility Study
- xii. Institutional Research Data-Sets (numerous)
- xiii. Community Conversations, "Who do we want to be?"
- xiv. Others (we should continue to add to this list)

Appendix 2: Stakeholders

Faculty

Staff

Admin (meaning those previously part of Admin Assembly)

Governance Councils/Tri-council/Data Governance Officials

SLT

Deans

Students

- Athletes
- SGC
- MLK
- Park Scholars
- Prospective Students (?) for perception of IC -- Enrollment Management (?)
- Information about Residential Hall Life

Parents

Board of Trustees

Alumni

London Campus

LA Campus

Community Stakeholders

- ICSD officials
- Local (city, town, county) Government
- Community Leaders
 - GIAC
 - Southside
- Local medical and mental health care officials

TC3 Officials

Appendix 3: Ground Rules for Events

- Structure events with clear thematic focus and outcome
- Invite relevant stakeholder that you can identify, and specifically ask them to invite others who they think would be important to have attend
- Publicize event
- If this is a follow-up to an earlier event, make sure to summarize your analysis and views of the earlier work and ask if they are in line with the audience, particularly if they have attended before.
- Collect names and emails of those who want to be contacted further for feedback and updates
 - Swipe in?
 - Pre-register?
- Follow event with report out to participants
 - Direct email
 - Website
 - Survey opportunity for feedback