**Strategic Planning Steering Committee**

**Working Session Notes**

**December 6, 2018**

**Present:** L. Bigelow, D. Broyld, C. Casamento, A. Cintron, D. Dauwalder, M. Jackson, Y. Kirby, Z. Toro, R. Wolff

**Guest:** Matt Ceppi

**Introduction:**

Members of the Committee introduced themselves to guest, M. Ceppi, external facilitator for the strategic planning process. Z. Toro explained that the purpose of the working session is to brainstorm and ultimately develop a “Plan for the Plan” and set goals for successful completion of a final draft.

Z. Toro then turned the meeting over to M. Ceppi, who facilitated the remainder of the session. M. Ceppi explained that the ultimate outcome of this process would be to create a strategic plan that is uniquely CCSU’s. Goals and objectives should embody the distinctive nature of where the institution is today and where it plans to be.

**Initial Questions/Concerns about the Process:**

M. Ceppi began a brainstorming session, fielding questions from the group about the strategic planning process:

* C. Casamento noted that the short term objective is to present a plan for the plan at the December 18th UPBC meeting. She suggested that M. Ceppi be present for that meeting.
* Z. Toro asked C. Casamento if M. Ceppi has been scheduled to meet with Alumni, CSU and Foundation members. C. Casamento confirmed that meetings are currently being scheduled.
* Z. Toro asked M. Ceppi if he reviewed the CSU White Paper. M. Ceppi confirmed that he had received and will review the document.
* L. Bigelow asked if the final strategic plan will be complete by this time next year. Z. Toro replied that the goal is to have a final draft by this time next year, and she asked the group if that timeline seemed too ambitious. M. Ceppi replied that this is an achievable goal, and drawing out the process any longer could be detrimental to the plan’s completion.

**“Scoping and Planning Meeting” Handout - Questions to Consider:**

M. Ceppi provided a “Scoping and Planning Meeting” handout, and the Committee reviewed and discussed a list of questions to consider for establishing the strategic planning framework:

1. **What is the Purpose of the strategic plan?**

* Drive strategic investment
* Accomplish vision and goals; set measurable goals and objectives
* Make a case with elected officials
* Inform capital campaign
* Highlight the uniqueness of the institution
* Create a context for growth and advancement

**Discussion Comments:**

* M. Jackson noted that CCSU’s Elements of Distinctiveness may not be widely known among faculty and other CCSU community members. Members agreed the strategic plan should include ways to increase the awareness, stress the importance, and improve the participation of Community Engagement and International Education. Z. Toro stated that the Elements of Distinctiveness are discussed at length in the NEASC report. The group must consider these elements and revise, modify or add to them as necessary. For example, it may be beneficial to redefine International Education to encompass other “global” initiatives happening across campus. Members also suggested including more research and internships in the International Ed and Community Engagement models.

* D. Dauwalder suggested that the strategic plan be written in such a way that every unit can understand, achieve and advance its goals. L. Bigelow added that it is also important to encourage connectivity among the branches of the institution. All units should be working together toward common goals.
* The plan should be a living document that shows step by step processes for growth as the institution moves forward. Frequent modification and updating may be required to achieve this goal. The group will look into establishing a timeline for updating the plan in order to include new accomplishments and modify goals.
* Z. Toro asked the group to think about whether CCSU should remain a teaching institution for the next ten years, or if there may be a more accurate way to describe the University as a whole. A great deal of research is done on campus, and labeling CCSU as a teaching institution may not adequately reflect research and other scholarly achievements. M. Jackson agreed that research universities have a much lighter teaching load and more monetary support for research. This type of change would be a System Office decision, and R. Wolff noted that UConn is considered to be CSU’s “research institution.” Z. Toro added that faculty conduct a great deal of student-oriented research, which is not widely publicized. L. Bigelow suggested using a more all-encompassing term like “Innovative University” to describe CCSU. Z Toro added that although CCSU is not a research institution, it is very unique from its sister institutions and should be described as such.

1. **What external trends, developments, partnerships, or other relationships are important to consider in strategic planning because they present opportunities or challenges? What are true mandates we need to be aware of?**

* The Committee identified some of CCSU’s key partnerships:
* Community Colleges – collaborative partners which allow CCSU to better reach and serve its community.
* K-12 Systems – relationships with K-12 systems are stronger than ever (Dual Enrollment, CREC New Haven, Hartford Promise, Anna Grace Project, EOP). There are some very unique and important partnerships here, many of which will ultimately help CCSU meet its enrollment targets.
* Adult Learners/Industry Partnerships – CCSU has relationships with several companies that offer tuition reimbursement to adult learners.

Z. Toro stated that she would eventually like to see all of these partnerships housed together so that these groups can work on common goals and leverage resources.

* The Committee then discussed some external trends and developments:
  + D. Broyld suggested creating a downtown campus presence in order to pull in different populations and organizations, build relationships and increase revenue. M. Ceppi noted that many campuses have a large downtown presence and much of the expenses are donor funded. Z. Toro noted that Community Central has a downtown presence already, and it might be a good idea to build upon it to include other organizations.
  + Z. Toro noted that the Hispanic population is growing faster than any other student population that the University serves. That said, it may prove very beneficial to become a Hispanic Serving Institution, which will ultimately allow the University access to specific funding opportunities. Having this designation could increase revenue and serve the entire population.
  + The Committee had a brief discussion regarding the value of a CCSU degree. Members noted that it is important to show students and parents the kinds of jobs and opportunities that a CCSU degree will afford them. Paid internships and campus employment are great ways to provide a sense of accomplishment, and it would be beneficial to put more resources into providing these to students. Z. Toro noted that while employment is an ultimate goal upon graduation, many faculty believe that learning is also about enrichment, and the strategic plan should reflect this as well.
  + Z. Toro noted that the State’s financial situation and its new governor are two factors that must be considered throughout the strategic planning process. D. Dauwalder stated that securing private funding has become much more competitive. M. Ceppi added that public opinion of the University on a national level should also be considered.

1. **Who are our stakeholders? How will we engage them in the conversation? How will we engage in analysis and define the value proposition?**

Group members identified the following University stakeholders: students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, donors, prospective students, community, neighbors, state, federal and local government, System Office, Board, collective bargaining units, media, employers, K-12 system, community college partners.

After some discussion, the group decided on the following action items to engage stakeholders:

* Hold a town hall meeting in early Spring to identify strategic themes. Develop survey questions to be administered to CCSU stakeholders.
* Create small workgroups to research and develop the strategic initiatives identified in survey and town hall meeting. These groups will include members of the UPBC, Senate, the CBAs and other campus and external groups (early Spring).
* Develop a timeline for group outcomes and deliverables. Workgroups draft their findings (Summer).
* Work groups deliver findings to Committee and then to University community in another town hall meeting. Committee drafts strategic plan (early Fall).
* Planning process is discussed in President’s Open Meeting, and draft goes to UPBC in October and Senate in November. Draft is also sent to IPC for review.

C. Casamento suggested developing a separate communication plan to promote the planning process within the CCSU community and to external constituents. Z. Toro asked that a separate meeting be scheduled in early January with marketing and communications personnel.

1. **What data and information do we want to consider for environmental analysis?**

Committee members had a brief discussion regarding what kinds of data are available for benchmarking and analysis (enrollment data, student/alumni surveys, full/part-time faculty ratios, etc.). R. Wolff noted that the University has historically received pushback on data-driven decisions, and that the CCSU community will want to see more explanation behind the strategic initiatives. Members ultimately agreed that the data would be included only to support and inform a greater narrative within the strategic plan. Former strategic plans were thought to be list-oriented, more complicated and harder to follow. Y. Kirby noted that a lot of useful data was already included in the NEASC report. L. Bigelow questioned if the Committee could utilize any of the work that the UPBC had already done to collect data for the strategic plan.

The meeting also included a brief discussion of some of the critical success factors for the strategic planning process, and M. Ceppi asked Committee members their thoughts on what the ultimate outcome of this process should be. Z. Toro stated that the planning process should tell a unique story that separates CCSU form every other institution and brings CCSU closer to its community. CCSU should take ownership of this plan and make necessary adjustments in order to achieve its goals. C. Casamento stated that the plan should drive strategic investment and have measurable goals that have a positive influence on donors and local government. Other members agreed that the process should create a high level of engagement across campus, as well as ways to effectively communicate successes and achievements. Rather than working in siloes, the University should come together as a whole to fulfill its mission and work toward future goals.

M. Ceppi concluded the meeting and stated that he would deliver a draft plan for the plan to the Committee for review by Monday, December 10th.