**SPC Board Report Fall 2019**

On behalf of the Strategic Planning Committee, I’d like to thank you for the opportunity to share our committee’s work. The SPC is a unique committee, because it is comprised of representatives from both administration and faculty meeting to discuss matters of strategic importance from a variety of perspectives. The focus of the SPC this semester has been strategic enrollment, campus morale, the presidential search, and aligning our membership and mission following recent staff restructuring. I will touch briefly on each of these initiatives presented to our committee.

First, I should note how this is a transitional year for SPC in many ways, but this does not make us unique on campus at this time. Throughout campus, faculty, staff and students adjust to staff restructuring, try to anticipate the ramifications of the many retirements ahead of us this spring, and look forward both eagerly and anxiously to what new priorities a new president and administration may bring. To state that faculty and staff feel in flux barely begins to capture the destabilization felt by many at this time. While these conditions don’t necessarily promote the highest possible levels of morale, they do highlight the amazing patience, dedication and resilience of so many DePauw employees who continue to focus on creating the best experiences possible for our students.

SPC has concentrated heavily on how to attract more of these great students following sustained drops in enrollment over the past decade. Our semester began with a presentation by VP Dowdle sharing a new marketing campaign “Gold Within.” SPC is hopeful this new campaign will help win back key market areas we lost last year (eg. Indy and Chicago). In this same meeting SPC discussed VPAA Berque’s identification of strategies to make DePauw a more transfer-friendly institution. All SPC members share the perspective that making DePauw more transfer-friendly is a positive step to both increase enrollment and increase the diversity of perspectives/experiences in the classroom. SPC suggests that any efforts to increase transfer-enrollment also must be coupled with support and assistance to these students to help them seamlessly transition to a new environment mid-stream.

Though not specifically involved with the presidential search we have also attended additional listening sessions to better understand the variety of faculty concerns about the search and aspirations for a new president. From these meetings, we can summarize the strong consensus among faculty to have as transparent of a search process as possible and to identify a presidential candidate who is an open and collaborative relationship builder, strong listener and fundraiser, who is inclusive, and is tested in managing crises, especially those related to identity. It is clear that many faculty feel a trust deficit related to the last presidential search process, so continued efforts to engage the faculty in the search process (to the greatest extent possible) would aid in legitimizing the next president and setting her or him up for success.

The SPC has been evaluating/discussing any role that it could play in fostering communication between faculty and the BOT.  In that effort, we are discussing how to align our Handbook charge with SPC’s actual practice. SPC currently functions as an advisory board to the administration. In recent years SPC has had the privilege to observe the BOT meetings, and has recently been invited to be an active participant in conversations. We feel this is a positive step forward, and we would like to offer the BOT the opportunity to engage with the committee in order to further facilitate a conversation on issues regarding the University. Moreover, we would like the BoT to offer us some ideas on how SPC could better serve the board. How would you imagine the role of SPC?

In conclusion, it is important to note that faculty and staff vigorously engage with and support our students on a daily basis, find new ways to help all over campus, and begin to think about the possibilities for the future in hopes that resilience now can indeed lead us to better times ahead.