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Memorandum

**To: CAUP Staff Council
CAUP staff retreat attendees**

Fr: Steve Forman

Re: Retreat outcomes and directions

My thanks to each of you for a good day together on 9/11. The quality of your participation - your good spirit, warmth, presence, and active listening made for a good meeting. And thank you for being so welcoming to me. I enjoyed being with you all.

This memo records the essence of what emerged.

You'll note that I have retained an outline format within the sections. The intention is to keep to a level of shorthand that retains the record of ideas without requiring much longer narratives. While we need a record of the day, busy people only need the essences. A simple listing of items - while lacking in a certain poetry - will be sufficiently clear to trigger action where necessary.

The Staff Council also has in its possession the notes provided by our student attendee Leea Brady. She did a good job and it will be good to have on record her notes on the flow of the day. These notes include the transcriptions from the five small groups.

I have not given attention to a couple topics. Leea's notes cover well the many positive statements about the survey. I have included further attention to the survey as a work item. I have also chosen to not characterize the content of Daniel's presentation. You will see that a key work item is continuation of the discussion with him about College direction.

It was agreed that sometime in the next few weeks, members of the staff Council will present the ideas within this report to the Dean, and ask for feedback and continued discussion.

But first, a couple thoughts from your consultant!

I take away the following from our time together:

- 1) The Staff Council has an important leadership opportunity. This report contains a number of important possible initiatives. Needed is a simple work plan for the year, owned by the Staff Council.

- 2) The CAUP staff remains keenly interested in dialogue with the Dean. We only got a chance to begin this process. (There was only time for a portion of staff to respond to Daniel's presentation. This memo can serve as a means to continue the discussion.)
For the Staff to creatively contribute to the Dean's vision, deeper discussion and understanding is needed. Thematic to the afternoon was a collective sense of needing to know more about the directions described by Daniel.
- 3) We did not devote substantial amounts of time to addressing internal communication issues between and among CAUP staff. I think there were two reasons for this:
 - a) The need in the afternoon to respond to – and process – the information received from Daniel that was mission-based and College-wide
 - b) A tacit acknowledgment that in fact the CAUP staff communicates well and in good spirit with each other. The morning served to confirm this for me.

I have enclosed as an addendum some examples of the “terms of engagement” that other staff groups have come up with. I show this as a potential work item.

- 4) All of you very much want the faculty to understand your interests, and to have the opportunity for dialogue with them and feedback from them. Further items of interest include a) how your respective agendas are aligned, b) identification of where there is reciprocity. We agreed that this is an important topic to discuss with Daniel. The 11/18 retreat with the faculty offers a point at which the Staff retreat results – form and method not known - should be provided to the Faculty.

A comment on staff as professionals

There was a very short, but important discussion that served to confirm a basic point. CAUP staff see themselves as - and are - career professionals, devoted to the mission of the College.

This deserves a notice!

And finally, the essential management task: Effective prioritization and implementation

Near the end of the retreat, a couple of you wondered about “work plans,” “bullet points,” and “the next steps,” that would allow staff to do new things. I would suggest that the Staff Council is the body responsible for creating a short list of important items culled from the items below.

What are the five crucial activities for the fall and winter that – if they were implemented – would really reflect movement forward? Who is responsible? Do they have the required resources? Do they have a place to report back?

Rather than be overwhelmed by the volume of ideas below, pick several that are clearly a) priorities and b) feasible within the resources that you have at hand.

The important content items

We support the sense we are getting regarding the creative directions for the College:

- 1) Aligning our curricula with changing needs in the world
- 2) Growing expertise in the arenas of environmental innovation
- 3) Projecting the kind of identity to participate in a world that is changing very quickly
- 4) Acknowledging that immediate and centralized support for research is pivotal
 - a) We need research outcomes that change the world
 - b) To get credit for productivity, we have to measure it
- 5) We as a staff want to leverage the things we do towards our evolving mission
 - a) We need more clarity on these new directions

We support the culture of collegiality that is emerging and want to nurture it:

- 1) Collaboration
- 2) Transparency and access
- 3) Enhanced communication between faculty, staff, Administrator and Dean

As new initiatives and directions take form, we ask that the Dean and Chairs acknowledge – and discuss with us - the reality of staff resource constraints as they apply to new work:

- 1) Some areas have proper resources, some don't (staff, space, funding...)
- 2) Over a long period, we have seen many projects added and are extremely resource constrained

We make a commitment to our own internal work for the coming year:

- 1) We want to contribute to the College goals: Grow programs, increase enrollment
- 2) We clearly want to know each other more. A new mix of professional events and opportunities to interact are desired
- 3) We will review the discussion on survey results that took place at the retreat.
- 4) We will create operational definitions regarding what collegiality and good communication looks like including developing a list of best practices and terms
- 5) We will look at how ideas, topics, and teams can best circulate
 - a) Discuss among ourselves new linkages and alliances with other units based on mission based changes
 - b) Explore how people with similar jobs might have formal organized meetings to discuss best practices
- 6) Explore how to enhance collaboration: Cross training, staff meetings and events to increase interaction will lead to better student services
- 7) Institute brown bag lunches on different topics

We very much want to tap our entrepreneurial resources and thinking - both as individuals and as the collective staff group

To assist us in creating our own ideas and in selling/marketing, we need to be more deeply involved in learning about:

- 1) The emergence of the (potential) College of the Environment
 - a) How we as a staff can be well educated - and therefore well positioned - to take advantage of the potential of the new College

- 2) Mission of the Sustainability Design Institute
 - a) We want to be able to talk effectively about sustainability
- 3) The Dean's creative organizational chart(s)
 - a) They were difficult to read as projected at the retreat
- 4) Discuss with the Dean how three bodies interact:
 - a) Staff Council, College Council, Executive Committee
 - b) Consider issues of staff representation the College Council and Executive Committee
 - i) *Liaisons?*
- 5) We are uncertain about the mission statement for the College and would like to be a part of discussions about it.

A range of communication ideas emerge

- 1) Create a communication plan that responds to emerging College mission-based priorities
- 2) There should be a path of information up and down with special attention to new faculty, new staff, new programs, changes to programs.
- 3) Seriously consider a staff position for director of communications– internal and external
- 4) Explore alternate media
 - a) Internal web site (Intranet)
 - b) CAUP media/research blog (For anyone to use about different research projects about what is going on in the college.)
- 5) Interacting with the Dean
 - a) Quarterly staff meetings with the Dean: dialogue and continued understanding of direction
 - b) Occasional blog by Dean: "I'm thinking about...."
 - i) Or....E-mails from the Dean
 - c) Finish the PowerPoint presentation started at the retreat.
- 6) Interacting with the Faculty
 - a) Staff Council or staff in general gets opportunity to meet with the Chairs
 - b) Monthly web update from the Chairs to the entire college – need more information directly from the Chairs
- 7) Interacting as a staff community
 - a) Quarterly staff meetings
 - b) Staff directory that describes what we all do
 - i) Listing who does what (for instance who handles keys and where can you send students so they go to the proper place)
 - c) Potential "port Fridays" (Daniel loves port!) to get a social gathering where information is disseminated in a social way.
 - d) Share interdepartmental guidelines and resource aids throughout the college. Like a guiding document for all departments (AKA a manual)

Other ideas

- 1) Tracking alumni and students, showcasing what they have done and are doing within the emergent mission based college priorities
- 2) Engagement of students
 - a) Students as TAs

- b) Cross training to increase interaction
- c) Staff with clear understanding of College direction so as to communicate consistently with students
- 3) K-12 as area of attention?
- 4) Conduct simple inquiry in whether there are any obvious functions that can be centralized for efficiencies to free up resources
 - 1. Outreach to K-12 community for summer academy
 - 2. Showcase the new Arch. Hall!!!