

UNIVERSITY PLANNING COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2020

Attendees

Ebony Cain
Paul Caron
Rick Cupp
Michael Feltner
Keith Hinkle
Connie Horton
Sara Jackson

Lee Kats
Rick Marrs (chair)
Marilyn Misch
Tim Perrin
Phil Phillips
Jeff Pippin
Steven Potts

Greg Ramirez
Mark Roosa
Michael Shires
Nicolle Taylor
Deryck van Rensburg
Helen Williams

Absent

James Gash
Darren Good
Gary Hanson
Pete Peterson

Observers

Juliano Bonavia
Mark Chun
Cynthia Colburn
La Shonda Coleman
Danny DeWalt
Rick Gibson
Ildiko Hazak
Jonathan See
Jody Semerau
Natasha Thapar-Olmos

I. Call to Order and Devotional

Provost Marrs called the University Planning Committee meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on October 28, 2020 via Zoom Meeting. Mark Roosa presented devotional thoughts.

Helen Williams and Marilyn Misch moved and seconded approval of the minutes for September 16, 2020, which were adopted.

II. 2030 Strategic Plan Draft

Tim Perrin presented the 2030 Strategic Plan draft. The Strategic Planning Task Force members joined the meeting. Tim Perrin commented that the task force has been meeting regularly since last October. The task force did a strategic planning exercise with UPC a year ago. A year later, the task force completed the process of preparation by doing situational analysis of the university. The task force has finished the second phase of doing envisioning for the university. The task force had sessions with all of the key stakeholders across the university. They are now on the third phase where they try to put together the strategic plan. Next spring, the task force will have a draft available for review by the community and they hope to distribute it by April 2021.

Tim Perrin provided a quick overview of some of the sessions that the task force held with various groups on campus. They started last February with the faculty of Graduate School of Education and Psychology. The task force held in person sessions with the faculty at GSEP, at the School of Public Policy and at Graziadio Business School. Then COVID hit, so everything else after those first three sessions had to be done virtually via Zoom. It allowed the task force to reach all across the country and the world. They had participants join them from international campuses. The task force had sessions for faculty. They had well attended sessions with members of the staff. The task force had focus groups with students. They had six different group sessions with alumni and a session with the alumni leadership council. The task force had sessions with the Crest Advisory Board, the GSEP Board of Visitors, the University Board and the Athletic Board. They gave the task force good feedback representing their community.

Tim Perrin shared the draft Strategic Plan document with the UPC members. He commented that they have received hundreds of pages of feedback from various stakeholders. All of that feedback has been reviewed by the task force. The task force has the strategy roadmap to show how the various parts of the plan relate together. The document starts with answering the following questions: Who are we?, Why do we exist?, Where are we trying to go?, What is our vision? The plan reflects key elements of Pepperdine and the priorities for the future. They have organized this around some animating convictions. These are deeply held values and beliefs that Pepperdine has that are central to its identity starting with this idea that God is being uniquely revealed in Christ as its affirmation statement. This conviction is central to Pepperdine's identity as a Christian University. The second conviction is the relentless pursuit of both academic excellence and Christian faith and values. Pepperdine refuses to choose between one or the other, but pursuing both relentlessly. There is a "both/and" quality that makes Pepperdine distinctive. The third conviction has to do with leadership, a central value to the university. Pepperdine wants to produce students who are leaders. Pepperdine wants to lead with courage and integrity as the university prepares students for roles of leadership. The fourth conviction relates to the importance of diversity and belonging. Pepperdine wants to be a place that celebrates diversity

and builds a strong community of belonging. The fifth conviction is the “Spirit of Place”. It first intended to refer the main campus in Malibu. Pepperdine’s distinctive place is more than that, it is not just about a particular location. It reflects the deeply held values. The task force also identified several empowering commitments. These are things that are critically important for the university in the next chapter. Without these empowering commitments Pepperdine is not going to be successful. The empowering commitments include building reputational and brand strength. One of the things that makes Pepperdine distinctive is its ranking and how the university is viewed by others. Regarding resources, every group that the task force talked to regarding what they need, they responded that they need more resources. There is a need to expand resources to build stronger partnerships and alliances. The third empowering commitment is strategic innovation. Pepperdine has been hit with the global pandemic. Pepperdine had to pivot quickly to a fully online experience. The university will continue to leverage technology and resources to be innovative and creative.

The task force has identified six strategic priorities. Priority number one is “Foster and Promote a Culture of Academic Excellence and an Enhanced Commitment to Integrative Scholarship and Learning”. This is a priority where library resources come into play. They focus on resources for faculty scholarship and integrative scholarship. Pepperdine has unique opportunities to be a leader as a Christian university. The second priority is “Cultivate Greater Community Engagement Guided by Incarnational Faith OR Inspire Every Aspect of University Life to More Deeply Embody Our Christian Mission”. This is the idea of Pepperdine’s Christian mission in action. Priority number three is “Deliver a Transformative Educational Experience that Holistically Prepares Students to Be Servant Leaders”. Pepperdine is focusing its commitment to a holistic experience for its students by preparing them for leadership. Priority number four is “Strengthen and Deepen a Community of Belonging”. Pepperdine has a desire to create a kind of community where everyone has value, every person is made in the image of God. Priority number five is “Elevate the University’s Presence and Impact in Los Angeles and around the Globe”. Pepperdine wants to be impactful locally and globally. Pepperdine has a desire to enhance its visibility and presence in downtown Los Angeles and greater Los Angeles. Pepperdine has a desire to strengthen its presence around the world. Priority number six is “Innovatively Reimagine the University’s Model for Academic and Operational Excellence”. It is important to continue the work that Pepperdine has done in the past. The university will creatively and innovatively reimagine how it can continue to ensure operational excellence and the delivery of a transformative educational experience.

Marilyn Misch had a question regarding the first priority. She commented that there was a lot of discussion about scholars, research, scholarship and there is very little discussion about actual teaching. She would like to see more emphasis on what happens in the classroom and what happens between faculty and students and not just in research. Tim Perrin replied that he appreciated that comment. It is so important to support this priority. There should be a stand-

alone goal about teaching and learning. Tim Perrin noted that they should think about the following question: “How do we support faculty so that we preserve our commitment to teaching and support high quality research as well?” Tim Perrin commented that they need a “both/and” approach to that. Dean Caron commented that he believes it is a parallel to a “third way”. Many universities overemphasize scholarship and neglect student experience. Pepperdine has tried to do them both well. Tim Perrin commented that they have framed it as part of the “third way”. It is important to preserve both of those commitments. Cynthia Colburn commented that they are also thinking in terms of incorporating students into their research and bringing their research into the classroom as well. Marilyn commented she doesn’t want it just to be about integrating their research into the classroom. She also wants it be about just being excellent mentors, advisors and teachers helping students grow. She want students to have a great classroom experience.

Dean Williams commented that the task force has done an excellent job crafting the strategic plan. She is very pleased with the task force’s focus on developing an image of Pepperdine that extends beyond the Malibu campus. Dean Williams noted that this is a significant part of the strategic plan. She saw a strategy emerging later on in the priorities. She asked Tim Perrin the following question: “Can you help me see in the priorities where strategies are in place in the document?” Tim Perrin replied that in strategic priority number five, it talks about elevating Pepperdine’s presence and impact in Los Angeles and around the world. That is a focused priority on recognizing the importance of Pepperdine’s history. It is recognizing how does the university really invests in its communities. In priority two, it talks about cultivating communities guided by incarnational faith. Richard Cupp commented that he likes the “third way” language. Richard Cupp asked the following question with regard to integrative scholarship, “Do they need to include a language of what they mean by integrative scholarship?” Tim Perrin responded that working across disciplines is one way to do integrative scholarship, applying practical knowledge with theory is another way to do integrative scholarship, working at the intersection of faith in their discipline is an example of integrative scholarship and bringing students into their research is another good example of integrative scholarship. The larger theme of the strategic plan is about wholeness. Tim Perrin commented that athletics does not show up in the document right now but it will be in the goal statements. It is an important part of Pepperdine’s building of its reputational strengths.

Sara Jackson commented that she likes the “Pepperdine way” better than the “third way”. She would like to brand it that this is the “Pepperdine way” and this is the core distinctive where they don’t choose between the two. It is important in terms of attracting resources to be clear on what is the university’s distinctive and how Pepperdine is different. Phil Phillips commented that he found the document hard to understand. He doesn’t understand how the animating convictions relate to the empowering commitments and how those relate to the priorities. He appreciates the thoughtful and rich writing but the document doesn’t inspire. Tim Perrin responded that he would like to talk more about it with Phil Phillips offline. Tim Perrin commented that the document is still

just a framework. It doesn't have the language to connect these pieces. The task force can help provide some context. Tim Perrin commented that they want the document to inspire. Jeff Pippin commented that he resonates with what Phil Phillips said. It is a great document but they need to realize that when a document is put together by a broad community, it is going to mean a lot of things to a lot of people, but he is not sure it has the clarity in terms of direction and priority. Tim Perrin responded that they are committed to having goals that are measurable. It will include qualitative measures and quantitative measures. They want to have a document that is bold and ambitious. Nicolle commented that the important thing they discussed with the task force was the organization of materials and how the structure of the document may speak to some of the things that they were talking about. Cynthia Colburn commented that she appreciates these comments as well. The task force have read many different strategic plans. The following questions came up at the task force meetings: How are we different? How can we distinguish ourselves? It is great to hear what is working and what is not working. Dean Williams commented that she had difficulty with the document in the early stages. It was not written in a traditional format. What Tim Perrin has presented today is really the core of the document. Dean Williams commented that the difference in the structure is causing a bit of concern. She appreciates the time that went into creating a solid core for this document. Tim Perrin responded that the task force decided to call these core convictions as animating convictions and empowering commitments because they wanted to have a document that looked like a Pepperdine document.

Greg Ramirez commented that he liked these underlying themes and how they impacted the different strategic priorities. It works pretty well because it is multidimensional in nature. Dean van Rensburg commented that he tries to get the scale and the ambition of the plan. Dean van Rensburg asked Tim Perrin: "What is your sense of the reach of the plan and the resources? How much resource will be required to deliver this?" Tim Perrin replied that once they have more concrete goals in place, they need to work with Greg's team and outside people as well to understand the full cost of what they are planning to do. It is going to be ambitious. It is going to be a big campaign. It will require significant new resources. It will be a major focus of the plan. Provost Marrs commented that this is a strategic plan from an academic institution. At top tier institutions, they are producing strategic plans that cause people to think. They want a strategic plan that shows the university's distinctiveness and not simply a template where they punch in their name. The really good strategic plans from top tier institutions are going this way.

Rick Gibson commented that the cost is definitely an issue. They can bring resources to it or they can also make decisions about the tradeoffs. They will be making big and important decisions that will impact the strategy, Pepperdine and actual people. Michael Shires asked whether they want to be more explicit about the role of online education. One of the big changes that is happening at Pepperdine right now is this transition to online learning. Tim Perrin commented that it is important to discuss how they can best articulate the important role of

online education. La Shonda Coleman commented about the recognition of Pepperdine being distinctive in the Christian faith. In the feedback the task force received from students, the students would say that “the faith piece is a Seaver thing” or “faith is important to me but I don’t see it expressed within my program”. She is interested in receiving any feedback across schools represented here today. Tim commented that they want this document to be embraced by all schools. Richard Cupp commented that School of Law had a survey about what is most important to students about the school and he noted that the faith aspect was one of the lower things on the list in terms of what motivated the students to come to Pepperdine. It is an issue, but it should not lead away from Pepperdine’s distinctive mission. Tim commented that the task force welcomes the UPC members’ feedback after the meeting.

III. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 a.m. The next meeting of the University Planning Committee will convene at 8:30 a.m. on November 18, 2020 via Zoom Meeting.