The Steering Committee (SC) met on Friday April 18th, from 1-5PM to identify its role in the College. In the past, the SC has been the custodian of issues related to resources. Over time the SC has been viewed by some in the college as a reactive committee where ideas were usually 'rubber-stamped' but sometimes rejected without an adequate framework with which to evaluate them. A negative climate pervaded SC meetings and an ambivalent attitude surrounds the entire concept of the committee. The members of the SC want the SC's role to be a more proactive and positive one.

As the College’s Academic Policy and Planning Committee (each college has one), the minimum charge of the SC is as follows:

1.0 Each college shall have an academic policy and planning committee that shall deliberate on and recommend academic policy and planning for the college. The committee shall conduct both long-range and short-range planning. Normally, the dean shall consult with this committee in advance of deadlines for decisions and shall make decisions only after this consultation.

   The committee shall have access to all budget and resource allocation information and to other information available to and from deans, departments or schools, and programs relevant to policy and planning.

2.0 This committee shall be charged with:
   a. Keeping policy and planning under continuous review and formulating and recommending the priorities among departments, schools, and programs in order to arrive at quality programs,
   b. Facilitating communication between university policy sources (e.g., Senate, administration, Chancellor’s Office) and faculty members of the college at large,
   c. Helping to coordinate departments, schools, and programs responses to policy actions taken by the Senate, the administration, the Chancellor’s Office,
   d. Cooperating with the Committee on Academic Policy and Planning, and
   e. By each February 1 reporting its activities and problems to the Committee on Academic Policy and Planning.

3.0 The committee shall comprise elected members (the number determined by each college) and the dean or designee as an ex officio member. The elected members shall serve staggered three-year terms and shall be eligible for reelection. The members shall elect the chair of the committee.

The committee began its deliberations with an open discussion, which revolved around the lack of strategic decisions, low faculty morale, and the need to align rewards with the strategic direction of the college. An important discussion also revolved around the creation/maintenance of programs abroad. At the end of the discussion, the SC decided that its role should be much broader than in the past. It, therefore, accepted the responsibility to make the strategic plan a reality.
We feel the primary mandate of the SC to be the facilitator (not creator) of the strategic vision and plan for the CBA. Rather than an end of the process gatekeeper, as in the past, we view the SC as the front end vehicle to motivate and maintain a collectively agreed upon direction for the CBA and, critically, the appropriate venue to be accountable for putting in place the appropriate reward systems communicated in the strategic plan. As the college’s AP&P, it will continue to serve as the committee that shall deliberate on and recommend academic policy and planning for the college. The committee shall conduct both long-range and short-range planning. Normally, the dean shall consult with this committee in advance of deadlines for decisions and shall make decisions only after this consultation. This will unfold in a series of meetings, which will prioritize the strategic initiatives, decide who/which unit will be charged with the initiatives, present/convince/allocate the responsibility to the appropriate unit, and follow up with the unit to monitor progress. The SC believes that this is an important gap in the college’s direction and administration of the strategic plan and it is pleased to accept the responsibility. Note that it IS NOT the role of the SC to be a higher authority or power broker, but rather as the name implies, a 'steering' mechanism to help keep the CBA moving down the track outlined by the strategic plan.