



WHAT WORKS - A KECK/PKAL CONSULTANT REPORT

COUNSEL AT AN EARLY STAGE OF FACILITIES PLANNING

Recommendations:

Develop clear departmental aims and objectives.

Your faculty, within and between departments, do not yet have a common agreement about goals for student learning— on the particular outcomes of learning in individual courses or departments, and about how those outcomes serve larger institutional purposes.

Build communication networks that lead to collaborative efforts.

There is an apparent lack of knowledge about *what works*. Faculty do not know of the expertise, experience, and interests of those within their division or across campus; there is also no sense that faculty are aware of the work of colleagues on other campuses or are interested in adapting reforms initiated elsewhere. Collaborations can be cost-effective: they lead to sharing, team-teaching and taking advantage of the resource of colleagues right down the hall or at a nearby institution. They can also serve students in an era of increased interest in inter/cross-disciplinary programs.

Mentor new faculty, perhaps across departmental lines.

This would be one step to getting the departments to talk and work together. Because of the lack of mentoring and the absence of departmental conversations about goals, new faculty have assumed undue responsibilities outside the department and have added new courses that are not central to your program.

Develop clear procedures for dialogue and communication, between and among faculty and the administration.

The mixed signals being sent and the perception of 'being-out-of-the loop' makes it easy for faculty to pull away from serious, ongoing discussions about renewal of program and facilities. Too many faculty are constrained by a perception of fiscal stringencies and of dollar limits, a constraint that is limiting their vision. A new building will be most effective when faculty have been challenged to dream big and have a common vision of the future.

Rethink policies and procedures that affect faculty productivity.

One of the mixed signals being sent concerns the value/role of research on your campus. New policies for promotion and tenure speak about research agendas that actively involve students, and new hires come with this understanding. However, the number and range of courses taught, the time spent setting up and tearing down labs, and the duplication of courses taught within and across departments reduces productivity and limits the time available for faculty to engage in research, reflection, collaboration, or other scholarly activities. Understand that new pedagogical approaches (as they are developed and implemented) will make significant demands on faculty time and energy.

BACKGROUND

On this campus, the Keck/PKAL consultants recognized that the community had moved too quickly to consider new facilities. They recommended a significant 'step-back' from thinking about spaces and suggested that a first step in the process of successful facilities planning was to have a broad consensus on goals.



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Develop an institutional plan for technology.

Incorporating computers and other technologies into classrooms and labs is now being done at the level of individual faculty and departments. A carefully crafted institutional plan will identify the most effective way to secure, place, and maintain the necessary information technologies in the short- and long-term.

Continue to engage the interest of trustees in planning, but do so realistically.

The involvement of trustee leaders has led to a greater sense of urgency, and thus to the accelerated timetable for the facilities project. Trustees as well as faculty must have both a vision and a realistic sense of what is possible and necessary.

Take small steps now.

One goal of improved spaces is to make science visible, using display cases and bulletin boards in hallways and open spaces to accommodate photos, reports, artifacts, and other materials that illustrate the nature of science; another is to provide space for the talking and working together that is at the heart of the scientific process. Even a walk through your present building suggests ways to make minor adjustments that would facilitate both communication and community even before you achieve your new spaces for science. ■

