



SUSTAINING COMMITMENT TO FACILITIES PLANNING

Recommendations

Set a precise schedule for continued planning.

After a long incubation period followed by a period of being 'on-hold,' the project is now on track. However, the current commitment and energy of the faculty can only be sustained within the confines of a carefully set and mutually agreed-upon timetable, and a clearer sense from the administration of what the college can afford. The administration must collaborate with faculty by being open about a realistic budget for facilities renewal. If the current effort does not move forward productively, it may be difficult to reinvigorate faculty for another facilities planning effort in the future.

Connect planning for various capital projects to efforts to strengthen institutional distinctiveness.

Do not underestimate the importance of a consensus on the nature of hallmark STEM programs and how they should be strengthened, and of forging a consensus about priorities among proposed curricular initiatives. There seems to be a lack of clear communication between faculty and the administration about how to maintain strong programs, with the perceived 'business' mentality of the administrative approach seeming to be alien to some faculty.

In particular, come to some clarity about the number of interdisciplinary initiatives that are being discussed (formally and informally) and evaluate each one from the potential impact it would have on the total program in science, including the continued planning for new spaces, as well as the contribution it would have on institutional budgets and culture.

Recognize that faculty are not design professionals.

The academic goals of the project, properly the province of the science faculty and administration, may be achieved by a number of architectural approaches. The design of said approaches is properly the province of the architects and engineers with whom the college will contract. For example, several faculty are convinced that interdepartmental collaboration can only be achieved by housing all faculty under one roof. Experience on other campuses suggests that promoting such collaborations can be achieved in ways that might be more cost-effective than the single-building solution. The faculty planners should not attempt or assume particular building solutions. ■

BACKGROUND

One southern campus had been engaged in a 'fits and starts' approach to thinking about new spaces, and needed help in thinking about ways to maintain the current momentum.