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DREXEL ENGINEERING

Strategic Planning Process Updates

Colleagues,

I'm writing to update you on the status of the College of Engineering's strategic planning process and to seek your diverse ideas, suggestions and perspectives. As you know, in March of this year, Professor Jonathan Spanier agreed to chair a strategic planning committee composed of members drawn from the academic and administrative departments of the College of Engineering and selected other Drexel colleges. I've been eager to begin a planning process from my arrival as dean in January. In March, I was still getting acquainted with the College's rich history and role in the University. I was also learning more about the exceptional contributions the members of our community make to Drexel and the engineering field; the time seemed particularly auspicious to begin planning for several reasons.

First, it had been years since the College had operated under a multi-year plan. Second, as a new dean, I felt strongly that it would be important to reach consensus within our community on a clear direction and to understand the priorities of the College. Thirdly, Drexel was completing an institution-wide strategic plan that articulates six bold strategic initiatives to guide the University for the next five years. In aligning our strategic plan with the University's, we had the opportunity to begin a frank, College-wide dialogue about our strengths and weaknesses, the challenges and opportunities around us, and our most-desired future - and, based on this dialogue, to articulate specific strategies and goals to guide us toward that vision.

In my charge to the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) at its kickoff meeting in March, I emphasized that the strategic plan and the planning process should be bold, achievable and transparent. President Fry has articulated a powerful vision for the University in the recently completed Drexel Strategic Plan. He has stated the centrality of the College of Engineering to that vision and expressed his willingness to invest in big ideas coming out of our planning effort that support the University's goals. In this context, it is time to tap into the bold thinking that exists among the members of our College community and to seek the ideas of nationally and internationally recognized thought leaders in the field of engineering.

To reach the vision we will craft for Engineering, our plan must be achievable. The planning process must be rooted in a hard-eyed, fact-based evaluation of our own strengths and weaknesses and the fit of our capabilities with the rapidly changing external environment in which technology education and engineers operate. Our plan must demonstrate a realistic awareness of our human, physical and financial resources yet not be unduly constrained by them. It must understand and respect the College's culture and traditions yet not underestimate our potential to grow and change.

Most importantly, for our strategic plan to succeed, the process that creates it must be

transparent, open and inclusive. We will invite input and feedback from every member of our community and many outside of it. We will not always agree on our priorities or even in the evaluation of our own capabilities; however, we will seek and consider every perspective on the College. From this vigorous contest of ideas we will reach consensus on a vision of our future and strategies to achieve it that we can all support because we value the process from which the plan emerged.

This letter is one part of that transparency and openness. In the next few paragraphs, I will describe the timeframe and components of the planning process, the Strategic Planning Committee's efforts to date and the many opportunities and forums available to you to engage with the planning process.

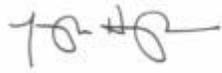
With the guidance and the support of President Fry, the College retained the services of [Anthony Knerr & Associates \(AKA\)](#), strategy consultants serving institutions of higher education and other not-for-profit organizations in the U.S. and Europe. AKA has worked with the Committee to establish roles and a detailed work plan that will allow us to complete the plan by the end of the calendar year. Most importantly, the SPC will reach consensus on a draft of the strategic plan by about November and share it with the College community for broad discussion in a variety of forums. AKA will gather and distill feedback and suggestions from all of these sources and engage the SPC in further discussion and revision to craft the final draft of the strategic plan.

Since its formation and charge in the spring, the SPC has met several times, facilitated by AKA, which additionally has conducted interviews with more than two dozen stakeholders across the College and University and among our alumni. The SPC is also reviewing qualitative and quantitative information about the College, reports on the current state and future of engineering, and comparative data on other colleges of engineering. AKA has shared its initial findings and hypotheses with the SPC, and through discussion the Committee has begun to map out a framework for the strategic plan.

With the SPC's work underway, our top priority now is to engage every member of the College community - students, faculty, department heads, staff at all levels, alumni and other stakeholders. We will soon be announcing a wide array of opportunities for you to participate and provide your perspectives. These opportunities will include:

- Separate meetings of our academic departments, students and staff
- One or two all-College town-hall meeting.
- A strategic planning web site providing a time line of the process, status reports, relevant data and articles, drafts from the SPC as they are released and options to comment on materials and/or send questions or feedback to the SPC
- Periodic updates at regularly scheduled faculty and staff meetings
- Opportunities to participate as members of SPC subcommittees focusing on selected issues.

I encourage all of you take advantage of these opportunities and participate in this process that is so important to our shared future in the College, to the future of the College at Drexel and to ensuring our continued contribution to the field of engineering.



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