

Gary Phillips described how the strategic planning group came up with the thesis question. The group came up with the bullet points first, which lead to the thesis question. The last strategic plan document has been reviewed to see what has been achieved and what has not. The group also worked from the mission statement, the Quality of Life survey and reviewed the data from Charlie Blaich.

- Student's don't know they want interdisciplinary teaching, but they like it when they get it.
- It's obvious that critical thinking requires multiple disciplines. Today, everyone is being interdisciplinary. Businesses look for people who are comfortable being uncomfortable.
- The second part of the thesis is a means to the first part rather than a new question, and confuses things. Why put that particular item in the thesis rather than some other? It prejudges things.
- This statement doesn't talk enough about preserving and improving things we're already doing.
- We could zero base our planning and ask if everything we're doing now is worth doing.
- Isn't this always a tension? We want to send our students on to graduate school well prepared, but we also want to do these other things – all with finite resources.
- But, we need more resources; that's part of a strategic plan.
- It keeps coming back to time; we don't have enough time.
- Every new faculty member should be linked to someone senior in a department far away from their own as a mentor.
- Our disciplines are different; some are more interdisciplinary than others. This process also invites us to ask questions about our own disciplines.
- Time is important. We teach the guys we have. That's harder than teaching the entering class at Oberlin.
- The answer is that we need more people.
- There are no anthropologists or sociologists in this conversation; they would have a lot to say about how to think about these issues. Maybe we could even consult a futurist, as MIT recently did.
- Technology as a discipline gets overlooked; how can we incorporate that?
- The point about technical and support staff for faculty is really important.
- Technology gives students access to so much more information, but we need to do a better job of helping them evaluate it.
- Charlie Blaich said what matters isn't what you do, but how you do it. What is that "how"? What makes for effectiveness?
- Mostly, it's the obvious good practices: make the syllabus clear, get the papers back promptly, etc.
- Sometimes lots of innovation gets in the way of basic good teaching practices; faculty members are so involved in planning that they don't get the papers back.
- Do we think of our mission statement as a sequence? Does thinking critically come first? Or is there a priority?

- You show more gains if you know what you're aiming at. The goals of liberal arts education aren't always as clear as pre-professional education.
- Alumni identify critical thinking as the most important of the four that they learned at Wabash.
- Group 4 plans focus groups with alumni to see why the other three don't seem as important to them.
- Professional schools do give specific goals.
- Professional schools put more emphasis on real world problems, case studies.
- Where is the call for interdisciplinary coming from? I'm not sure students particularly want it.
- There's lots of distance between the thesis statement and the first two items under it. Maybe the best way to achieve that goal in the thesis statement would be to spend four years studying Aristotle.
- We do need to distinguish outcomes from the means to achieving them.
- We can integrate both disciplinary excellence and interdisciplinary; it isn't an either/or question.
- Has this group conferred with group 4? No. Interdisciplinary doesn't come from students; much of the most interesting work in our fields these days is interdisciplinary.
- But, we can't move in this direction just because it's fund for the faculty; it has to be valuable to the students.
- Interdisciplinary teaching can be a way of encouraging good teaching practices as people learn from each other.
- We need to develop the different kinds of literacy among our students; that's inevitably interdisciplinary.
- We're not a university. We can't do Europe and Asia and Africa and everything else. We need to teach students how to learn about different cultures.
- Did we discuss where to add faculty? Not yet.
- Zero-based budgeting involves asking what we can cut from what we do now.
- What happens next? We need to ask what is most important and how we do that.
- This is a five-year plan; we had to decide which comes first.
- A strategic plan also protects what's good.
- Team-teaching is hard to pull off. We need to discuss it more before moving in that direction.
- Men, and lower to middle class men in particular, tend to think of education as serving a goal; they don't look for the joy in it.
- Lot of distance between thesis and 1st two questions.
- Who are the guys coming in, and what do we need to do to teach and advance them?
- What is working well and what is missing?
- How do we retain women faculty here?
- Immersion trips are important. Maybe we should consider a Maymester, January term, or summer term. But, faculty and students would not be required to participate.
- Do not reduce departments or disciplines.

- Has there been any discussion on coaches who are associated faculty who teach non-credit courses? No.
- Did the committee consider students who come in who need remedial help?
- Stories from alumni had to do with faculty. They remember classes and faculty.
- How do we get students to read?
- Help encourage reading, let students see faculty off duty. Discuss reading. There is the opportunity for off-duty intellectual discussions.
- Faculty can show what they do in research. Students can see what faculty do if we have a winter session, Maymester, etc.
- The College lacks space.
- Improve intellectual life. We need a prominent sizable bookstore with a café. There is discussion on restructuring a student center.
- Wabash needs to show what we do best and express it to the outer world.