

Report of the Academic Planning Group

April 5, 2007

Introduction

The following is the report of the Academic Planning Group, documenting faculty efforts to shape the academic core of the strategic plan for the future of Bucknell University. It is our aim to provide a faculty voice in the current conversation over the future of the University; in that regard, we hope that this document will provide meaningful input into that conversation as it relates to *The Plan for Bucknell*. We also present this document as representing the will of the faculty, not only to engage in this important conversation, but also to assist in the earnest goal of providing for our students and our colleagues the best educational environment possible.

In Part 1 of the following document, we establish the history of the Academic Planning Group (hereinafter “Group”) from its initial charge through its organizational phase into its initial operation. We then clarify some of the working definitions used by—and the assumptions made by—the members of the Group. In Part 2, we address the central issue facing Bucknell through an engagement with the strategic vision for the future of the University, providing recommendations based on our communications with the faculty. To support and clarify our presentation, we also provide the requisite documentation at the report’s conclusion.

PART 1. The Academic Planning Group

1.1. Charge

In April, 2006, the faculty requested that the Faculty Council create an advisory board to provide a voice in the discussion of those elements of the *Plan for Bucknell* related to the academic core, specifically to provide for communication across all of the academic units. Toward that end, the Academic Planning Group was officially created and charged by Provost DeCredico on September 13, 2006. (See Appendix 1: Charge). The charge, as interpreted by the Group, calls for the formation of an advisory body, and the solicitation, integration, organization, and categorization of ideas from all parts of the campus related to the academic core.

1.2. Organization

As stated in the charge, “The members of the Academic Planning Group have been appointed by the Department chairs and program heads in consultation with the Faculty Council.” Three representatives were drawn from each of the Divisions of the College of Arts & Sciences (two tenured, one untenured) and from the College of Engineering. The Academic Planning Group was co-chaired by the Deans of the two colleges. The Provost served ex-officio, represented in her absence by James Rice, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. University units whose work closely related to the academic core were also represented: Acting Dean of Students

Gerald Commerford represented student life, and Interim Co-Director of ISR Nancy Dagle represented information and technology support. Initially, Mark Dillard, Director of the Office of Strategy Implementation, provided logistical support for the Group; he was later replaced by Dennis Swank, Associate Vice President for Finance. (See Appendix 2: Academic Planning Group Membership.)

1.3. Operation

The Academic Planning Group met regularly throughout the fall semester, 2006, drafting a request for proposals to facilitate suggestions for tactics from the faculty. In preparation for receiving these tactics, the Group also engaged in discussions evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the University.

On September 30, 2006, a “Request for Proposals” was sent electronically to the University faculty, inviting “individuals, programs, departments, divisions, and colleges, either alone or collaboratively, to explore and propose ideas that can be developed into tactics within the strategic plan.” The deadline for proposals was December 15, 2006. Roughly 90 proposals containing more than 100 tactics relevant to the academic core were received. (The Group did not review the nearly 200 tactics relevant to non-academic units.)

Once collected, the Academic Planning Group evaluated the proposals (identified as “tactics”) according to the various guidelines developed in the course of the Group’s meetings. First, the tactics were grouped according to the kind of request embodied in the proposal:

- Requests for new programs, departments, or credentials;
- Requests to enhance existing programs, departments, or credentials;
- Centers (new and enhancements);
- Facilities;
- Special Initiatives.

Group members were asked to categorize the proposals according to the perceived cost-to-benefit ratio, and assign the proposal a number based on the designations described in the following section.

1.4. Definitions

As reflective of the Group’s understanding of its charge, proposals have been evaluated according to a variety of considerations developed by the Group in its discussions. These considerations include the following:

- the long term impact of the proposal;
- its ability to address critical needs (including remedial needs);
- the extent, breadth, timing, and who is affected by the proposal;
- its relationship to the strategic goals and initiatives articulated in *The Plan for Bucknell* (including how it might be supported by or tied to the *Plan*);
- its potential to make Bucknell unique;
- its cost;
- how it compares to programs at peer institutions, its relationship to other proposals;
- its connection to existing resources or programs at Bucknell;
- its likelihood of success;
- its relationship to perceived challenges of living and working in the 21st century; and
- its relationship to the liberal arts character of Bucknell.

The Group conducted its work with the understanding that the academic core is the foundation upon which the University is built . While the Academic Planning Group sought to fulfill its charge with respect to the solicitation, integration, and organization of ideas from all parts of the campus related to the academic core, it did so with the understanding that proposals from across the campus that might seemingly be unrelated to the academic core could have a significant impact on the University.

The numbering system employed for the categorization is not specifically intended to indicate preference or priority (other than between proposals in categories 2 and 3), but endeavors to reflect the Group's evaluation of the costs required for a particular proposal and our assessment of whether adequate information was provided to make an assessment. The categories were defined as follows:

- Category 1, assigned to proposals with significant merit and which required little or no new resources;
- Category 2, assigned to proposals with a high benefit-to-cost ration which required significant new resources, or proposals that identified a currently unmet need for the university, even if the benefit-to-cost ratio could not be estimated;
- Category 3, assigned to proposals with a moderate cost-to-benefit ratio which required significant new resources, and thus a proposal that, in the collective estimation of the

Group, should be considered more fully at a later phase of the strategic planning process; and

- Category 4, assigned to proposals that required additional information before they could accurately be evaluated.

General criteria used to evaluate proposals are given in the Request for Proposals. (See Appendix 3.) Differentiation of the impact of proposals was only made between those in Category 2 and Category 3. Tactics placed in Category 2 were collectively deemed to be of more general benefit relative to cost than those in Category 3.

In the Group's deliberations, it became clear that a number of proposals in Category 4 were so designated because of a perceived need for more community-wide discussion about matters related to the proposal. For example, proposals calling for expansion of the graduate program were seen by many to require in-depth discussion about the impact this might have on Bucknell's Carnegie designation. Others argued that more community-wide discussion about the nature and presence of "centers" at Bucknell was needed before more resources could be devoted to such proposals.

It was generally understood by the Group that those proposals being designated as Category 1 were generally those that could be addressed with minimal commitment of new financial resources. (See Appendix 4: Academic Planning Group Clarifications.)

Some programs and departments submitted proposals containing multiple tactics. The Academic Planning Group did not consider each tactic separately, but assigned a single composite score to these proposals. Because of the limited time available to the Planning Group for its deliberations, it was not possible to return to these proposals to evaluate each individual tactic.

PART 2. The Strategic Vision within the Academic Core

Bucknell has long been dedicated to providing outstanding educational opportunities to a predominantly undergraduate student body of great potential. Indeed, the academic vision can be articulated through the following slight modification of the university's vision statement:

"To provide students with the premier undergraduate educational experience in American higher education."

The University must strive to prepare its students for a future of rapid change, a future that cannot be fully anticipated. It must develop in its students transferable capacities to respond to change, avoiding an emphasis on skills of limited applicability and endurance.

Bucknell is an institution in which highly effective teaching by dedicated, highly qualified faculty is the expectation, and the norm. It is an institution in which the faculty care about their students, as both students and individuals, and interact frequently with them both within and outside of the classroom. It is an institution in which students can explore a wide range of

educational experiences through both academic offerings and residential life opportunities. It is within this context that educations of both immediate and enduring value can be achieved.

Described below are observations of the Academic Planning Group on strategic vision within the academic core. These observations are informed by the mission statement presented in *The Plan for Bucknell*, strengths and limitations discussed within meetings of the Group, and the tactics submitted by the faculty. The observations attempt to identify strengths and challenges that can be enhanced and redressed, respectively, in the upcoming capital campaign and in achieving our strategic goals.

2.1. Mission Statement

Bucknell is a unique national university where liberal arts and professional programs complement each other. Bucknell educates men and women for a lifetime of critical thinking and strong leadership characterized by continued intellectual exploration, creativity, and imagination. A Bucknell education enables students to interact daily with faculty who exemplify a passion for learning and a dedication to teaching and scholarship. Bucknell fosters a residential, co-curricular environment in which students develop intellectual maturity, personal conviction, and strength of character, informed by a deep understanding of different cultures and diverse perspectives. Bucknell seeks to educate our students to serve the common good and to promote justice in ways sensitive to the moral and ethical dimensions of life.

2.2. Strengths and Limitations

Before beginning the process of categorizing tactics, the Academic Planning Group sought to identify those characteristics that best define the strengths and limitations of Bucknell. Over the course of several meetings, both positive aspects of the Bucknell educational experience as well as limitations in its impact on our students were discussed. The group specifically addressed the questions:

1. *What practices, priorities, structures, and resources make a Bucknell education especially valuable, effective, and/or distinctive? In short, what do we offer now that many other institutions of higher education do not or cannot?*
2. *What practices, priorities, structures, and resources limit the value, effectiveness, or distinctiveness of our educational programs and outcomes?*

(For the complete lists of responses to these questions, see Appendix 5: Bucknell Strengths and Limitations.) Broadly speaking, the strengths of the university can be distilled into the following items:

- Outstanding quality of students, faculty, and staff;
- Focus on excellent undergraduate education;

- Opportunities for students to interact closely and work directly with faculty;
- Exceptional faculty commitment to the intellectual and personal growth of students;
- Excellent and attractive campus and facilities;
- Appropriate balance between faculty teaching and scholarship;
- Size, setting, and collegial university culture;
- Opportunities for integrated academic, residential, and co-curricular student experiences;
- Dedication of faculty and staff to the overall good of the institution;
- Disciplinary depth coupled with interdisciplinary opportunities;
- Synergy of liberal arts and professional programs;
- Range and depth of opportunities available to both students and faculty.

Items identified as limitations or challenges can be broadly described as:

- Difficulty of educating 21st century leaders and citizens of the world with an appropriate emphasis on diversity, technological awareness, and internationalization;
- Ability of the current curricular structure to meet present-day and future educational objectives;
- Preparation of students for the rigors of collegiate academic expectations;
- Lack of clear institutional learning objectives and assessment mechanisms;
- Appropriate rewards and recognition for the full range of faculty activities;
- Potentially conflicting academic and non-academic student commitments;
- Student awareness of, and engagement in, national and international issues;
- Opportunities for student intellectual activity beyond the classroom;
- Sufficiency of institutional resources to ensure strong recruitment and retention of exceptional students and faculty.

2.3. Academic Vision

The strengths and limitations listed above provide a context not only for the task of categorizing proposed tactics but also for defining a strategic vision within the university's academic core. In the report provided by President Mitchell on the January 2007 winter meeting of the Board of Trustees, he identified the need for creating "a strategic plan for the academic core that can guide us in achieving Plan goals, selecting among tactics, and strengthening academic programs." In a very real sense, the over 90 proposals received by the Academic Planning Group *are* the strategic vision within the academic core, or at least the initial component of such a vision. Although the proposed academic tactics do not constitute a truly comprehensive survey, they clearly represent the initiatives about which individual faculty members, groups of faculty, departments, programs, as well as entire colleges feel most strongly. The conceptualization and writing of the proposed tactics required significant faculty time and effort, and that effort represents a strong indication of faculty sentiment for the growth and evolution of the University during this planning period.

As important as the existing tactical proposals are in helping to identify a strategic vision within the academic core, the individual tactics themselves do not provide a unifying framework for the academic core. They may also not represent all possibilities, given that some important initiatives may not yet have a constituency on campus to advocate their pursuit. The development of an academic framework, in our view an essential component of a comprehensive strategic vision for the university, has not been directly addressed by the Academic Planning Group, due to our own time constraints. Nonetheless, at this point, it is possible to identify themes that have evolved from the discussions and deliberations of the Group, drawn from the tactics and from our own discussions, as well as to *imagine* directions for the university that could emerge from a broad-based development of a strategic vision, led of course by a comprehensive academic framework.

Programmatic themes that appear to be viable elements of such an academic strategic vision could include:

- Globalization and Internationalization;
- Energy and the Environment;
- Liberal Education, in the sense of the traditional liberal arts and sciences;
- Civic Engagement/Service Learning;
- Technological Awareness and Technological Capabilities;
- Culture and the Arts;
- Ethics;
- Diversity;

- Interdisciplinary Studies.

Beyond these broad themes, the types of initiatives that *could* be part of a comprehensive academic strategic vision unique to Bucknell include such elements as

- A revised set of thematics for the Common Learning Agenda (for example, globalization, ethics, sustainability, technological literacy, diversity, etc.);
- Expansion of the residential college program both horizontally (including new colleges) and vertically as part of a broader effort to more closely integrate academics and student life;
- Greater emphasis on foreign culture or language study;
- Expanded service learning opportunities;
- Expanded programs (“Bucknell in” programs and others) for study abroad;
- Strengthening of existing programmatic centers (e.g., Environmental Center; Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender; Stadler Poetry Center; Humanities Institute);
- Creation of new centers, institutes, and schools (e.g., Center for Globalization Studies; Center for Energy Studies; Institute for Social Science Research and Policy Analysis; Center for the Study of Ethics and Human Values; Institute for Leadership in Technology, Science, and Management; School of Management; Center for Culture and the Arts; School for Interdisciplinary Studies, etc.) that can directly and broadly enrich the educational offerings of the University;
- Restructuring of the College of Arts & Sciences (for example, a separation of the college into separate schools or colleges along current divisional lines).

The above themes and ideas are not meant to be a comprehensive list but rather a starting point for wide-ranging discussions of the elements of an academic strategic vision. For the academic vision to go beyond simply incremental improvements to the existing structure of Bucknell, efforts must be made to build on the input at hand (the proposed tactics) as well as to look broadly at the initiatives underway at other academic institutions and at the changing world of the 21st century. This endeavor must be done in such a way that accurately represents the aspirations of the current faculty while building on existing strengths, overcoming certain limitations, and seeking to constructively position Bucknell to offer the premier undergraduate education of the future. Moreover, this discursive effort must be coupled with the pragmatic goal of attracting donors who will fuel the future of Bucknell through the fundraising efforts of the upcoming capital campaign.

Recommendations

Based on the understandings represented here, and the proposals submitted in response to its “Request for Proposals,” the Academic Planning Group makes the following recommendations:

1. We understand that the Tactics Team will be working with proposal authors to further develop the proposed tactics, including refinement of the proposed activities and their institutional benefits as well as a cost structure and timetable for implementation. The Academic Planning Group stands ready to assist the Provost and Tactics Team in those next efforts in any way that might be of value to them and to Bucknell.
2. We recommend that the Tactics Team proceed to implement the proposed tactics and/or to incorporate them into capital campaign materials in accordance with the following:
 - Proposals in Category 1 should be implemented as soon as they have been approved by the university governance system and funded by internal budgetary procedures;
 - Proposals in Categories 2 and 3 should be forwarded to the Office of Development and Alumni Relations as soon as they have been approved by the university governance system. In our view, proposals in Category 2 should be viewed as tactics with a high benefit-to-cost ratio, chiefly because the benefits accrue broadly to the academic core, and thus should be given preference in receiving funds for implementation in the near future;
 - Progress on the funding of proposals should be communicated to the university as a whole as well as the individual departments, faculty, or other proposal authoring entities on a regular basis;
3. We recommend that the Tactics Team make available to the Academic Planning Group all of the tactics—from all quarters of the University, be they academic or not—that were submitted as part of the recent initiative. This would not only enable the Academic Planning Group to identify synergies between and across institutional units, it would also enable the Group to identify connections with tactics that might not ordinarily be seen as having a significant impact on the academic core.
4. Finally, we recommend that the University—through the mechanisms already established by the Academic Planning Group and the Tactics Team—begin preparing now for further rounds of tactics solicitations, both by soliciting additional information as needed from proposals in Category 4 and by soliciting additional proposals for further rounds of review by the Academic Planning Group. We further recommend that the Academic Planning Group’s charge be extended so that it may provide continuous review of such tactics, make recommendations to the Tactics Team, and regularly review the advisory and implementation process of the tactics once they have entered the process.

As specified in item 2 above, the Academic Planning Group stresses that proposed tactics must be reviewed and approved by the university governance system (curriculum committees,

Committee on Staff Planning, etc.) before implementation. Furthermore, the Group wants to make clear that all proposals for FTE's are in addition to, and not to replace, current University commitments to departments to fill curricular gaps created by the transition to a five course teaching load.

Conclusion

The Academic Planning Group, interpreting the will of the faculty and its collective vision for the future health and vitality of Bucknell University—from its academic core to its various peripheries—looks forward to the sustained excellence that is the product of a healthy community in conversation over its mutual wellbeing. We offer this report on the proposals as per our charge, as well as any continued guidance we can offer to the implementation of the *Plan for Bucknell* and the future of the University.

Respectfully submitted,

James G. Orbison
Dean of Engineering
Co-Chair, Academic Planning Group

Christopher Zappe
Interim Dean of Arts & Sciences
Co-Chair, Academic Planning Group

APPENDIX 1

Charge: Academic Planning Group

As we begin the new academic year, we are also embarking upon the implementation of *The Plan for Bucknell*. As you know, President Mitchell has appointed Vice President for Finance and Administration Dave Surgala and me to co-chair the Tactics Team. Chair of the Faculty Marty Ligare and Director of the Office of Strategy Implementation Mark Dillard round out the team.

In order to assure that all constituencies on campus have an opportunity to propose ideas and specific tactics, it is essential that we have open, transparent lines of communication. This will encourage a broad participation of all stakeholders and will enable the Tactics Team to make sound and timely recommendations to President Mitchell who will also make periodic reports to the Board of Trustees updating them on our work.

Last April, the Faculty Council as a subset of the University Council was asked by the faculty as a whole to create another advisory body to facilitate the discussion of tactics across departments, divisions, and colleges. Toward that end, I have created the Academic Planning Group to request all constituencies' proposals, projects, and tactics. The members of the Academic Planning Group have been appointed by the department chairs and program heads in consultation with the Faculty Council. They include three representatives (two tenured and one untenured) from each of the Divisions of the College of Arts and Sciences and three from the College of Engineering.

The Plan for Bucknell outlines five strategies which are individually articulated but are intrinsically linked through the academic core. The Academic Planning Group will ensure that tactical linkages between all five strategies are fully explored at the department, division, and program level. The Academic Planning Group will prioritize and recommend specific tactics to the Tactics Team and the President. This group will be co-chaired by Dean Jim Orbison of the College of Engineering and Interim Dean Chris Zappe of the College of Arts & Sciences and will report to me in my role as provost and chief academic officer. The Provost will serve as an ex officio member; when I am unable to attend, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Jim Rice, will represent me.

The Academic Planning Group will be given specific deadlines to submit plans and tactics to the Tactics Team in order to insure the process does not become overly encumbered in a way that would prevent the accomplishment of key objectives. The Academic Planning Group will also provide regular and consistent feedback to the University to insure all elements of the campus understands what proposals have been submitted.

The Academic Planning Group will forward the first wave of initiatives to the Tactics Team by December 1, 2006. We fully expect that initiatives will continue to be proposed and evaluated throughout the life of *The Plan for Bucknell*.

APPENDIX 2

Academic Planning Group Membership

- Co-Chairs: James G. Orbison, Dean of Engineering
Christopher J. Zappe, Interim Dean of Arts & Sciences
- Faculty: Keith Buffinton, Mechanical Engineering
Mitchell Chernin, Biology (resigned)
Christopher Daniel, Geology (Spring 2007)
John Enyeart, History
Abe Feuerstein, Education (Spring 2007)
Janet Knoedler, Economics
Eric Michael Mazur, Religion
Molly McGuire, Chemistry (Fall 2006)
Scott Meinke, Political Science
Alice Poust, Spanish
Michael Prince, Chemical Engineering
Stephen Stamos, International Relations (resigned)
Joseph Tranquillo, Biomedical Engineering
Karl Voss, Mathematics
- Ex-Officio: Mary DeCredico, Provost
Martin Ligare, Physics & Astronomy, Chair of the Faculty
James Rice, Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs & Development
- Liaisons: Gerald Commerford, Acting Dean of Students
Nancy Dagle, Interim Co-Director, Information Services & Resources
Mark Dillard, Director of the Office of Strategy Implementation (Fall 2006)
Dennis Swank, Associate Vice President, Finance (Spring 2007)

APPENDIX 3

Request for Proposals

Date: September 30, 2006
To: University Faculty, Gerry Commerford, Janice Butler, Lois Huffines, Robert Midkiff, Gene Spencer, and Jerry Rackoff
From: The Academic Planning Group
Subject: **Request for Proposals**

Objective

As you know, the Board of Trustees adopted the University's strategic plan, *The Plan for Bucknell*, in April of this year. Provost Mary DeCredico then created the Academic Planning Group this fall to facilitate the development of tactics that will support and advance the success of the strategic plan and, subsequently, inform the creation of goals for the upcoming comprehensive campaign. Toward that end, we now invite individuals, programs, departments, divisions, and colleges, either alone or collaboratively, to explore and propose ideas that can be developed into tactics within the strategic plan. Ultimately, this will allow us to achieve *The Plan's* vision statement: "*To provide students with the premier undergraduate experience in American higher education.*"

While the implementation of The Plan will be an ongoing process, the first "wave" of ideas should be submitted to the Academic Planning Group by **December 15, 2006**, in order to be assured of inclusion in the initial review process. Since the review process has been designed to assist individuals recommending proposals, submission of ideas can be relatively simple. Please address the following in your submission, limited in length to three pages:

- A description of the idea (proposed tactic),
- A description of the impact of the tactic on the vision statement and one or more of the five strategies described in *The Plan for Bucknell*, and
- A description of the relationship between the estimated resources needed to implement the tactic and its expected impact on *The Plan*.

The Process

As part of its charge, the Academic Planning Group "will prioritize and recommend specific tactics to the Tactics Team, and the President." The first set of tactics will be forwarded to the Tactics Team (composed of Mary DeCredico, Provost; Mark Dillard, Director of Strategy Implementation; Marty Ligare, Faculty Chair; and Dave Surgala, VP for Finance and Administration) early in the spring, 2007 semester. The Tactics Team will then report to President Mitchell by March, 2007.

Evaluative Criteria

Members of the Bucknell community are encouraged to submit recommendations of tactics and initiatives that, in their conception and anticipated implementation, reflect and are informed by the following criteria:

- **Relationship to the Academic Core**
The expected contribution of a tactic to Bucknell's commitment to strengthening the academic core*
- **Impact Across the Five Strategies**
The impact of a tactic on one or more of the five strategies outlined in *The Plan for Bucknell*
- **Investment versus Expected Impact**
The relationship between the required investment in a tactic and the anticipated impact on *The Plan* and the campus community.

* For tactics and initiatives relating to the Academic Core, submissions are encouraged that cohere to the following language from *The Plan for Bucknell*:

Strategy #1: Strengthen the Academic Core

*Bucknell will offer an academic program that achieves the highest standard of quality across its liberal arts and professional programs. **Bucknell supports innovation and distinctiveness in areas of current and emerging importance and relevance.***

- *Ensure the relevance of the University's curricula and identify opportunities for **innovation, cross-disciplinary studies**, and creative expression, within a student-centered learning environment.*
- *Develop **areas of programmatic excellence** that build on Bucknell's liberal arts and professional programs and the University's emerging strengths.*

Please forward your submissions via email attachment to co-chairs Jim Orbison (jorbison@bucknell.edu) or Chris Zappe (zappe@bucknell.edu) by **December 15, 2006**. Questions can be directed to either co-chair as well, or to any member of the Academic Planning Group.

APPENDIX 4

Academic Planning Group Clarifications

1) Clarification of Charge - The APG is charged to review and prioritize those tactics submitted to it. This prioritization will in essence be a “benefit-to-cost analysis” that will a) determine whether or not the tactic submitted coheres with the objectives of the *Plan for Bucknell* and b) will group tactics by both theme/type and cost/benefit ratio. The APG’s evaluative categories are:

Evaluative Categories for Tactics

Category 1: Proposals have merit and require very few or no resources. These proposals have a very high benefit-to-cost ratio and can be implemented quickly with existing resources.

Category 2: Proposals appear to have a high benefit-to-cost ratio, but have significant costs associated with them, or are proposal that identify a clear need for the university even if the benefit-to-cost ratio cannot be estimated accurately.

Category 3: Proposals with a moderate cost-to-benefit ratio and having significant costs associated with them, and should be considered fully in subsequent iterations of the implementation process.

Category 4: Proposals which require additional information before they can be accurately assigned to one of the three categories described above.

NOTE: The APG will recommend the advancement of tactics *in principle* only, with the assumption that regular governance review/approval procedures would occur before implementation of tactics relating to new academic programs, credentials, etc. Similarly, it is not the APG’s role to recommend specific revisions to the CLA or the assignment of new faculty positions which will remain under the purview of Academic Affairs and the relevant governance committees.

2) While future “waves” of tactics are anticipated, the APG’s present task is to evaluate the initial wave of submissions, summarize its conclusions, and advance those results to the Tactics Team. Thus, the APG will remain a representational *ad hoc* group that will re-convene when a critical mass of new tactics exists in the future.

3) The Provost’s Office will use the summative work of the APG in drafting any future articulation of an “academic vision” to the Board or other constituents.

APPENDIX 5

Bucknell Strengths and Limitations

*Academic Planning Group
October 26, 2006*

1. What practices, priorities, structures, and resources make a Bucknell education especially valuable, effective, and/or distinctive? In short, what do we offer now that many other institutions of higher education do not or cannot?

- *Small class sizes*
- *Student-faculty interaction*
- *Student-faculty research and other projects (noted: especially unusual in the Humanities)*
- *Faculty who are accessible and approachable*
- *Faculty continuity (although some sense this is declining), commitment to the institution and its educational mission*
- *Students are treated with respect, and as individuals; a commitment to the welfare of the students*
- *A culture of collegiality fosters collaborations, shared learning experiences and explorations on the part of both faculty and students*
- *The size of the university is large enough to facilitate a wide range of interactions between both students and faculty on diverse issues and topics of mutual interest*
- *Faculty teach all courses, recitations, and laboratories*
- *Quality of instruction, quality of the classroom learning experience*
- *Correct balances: teaching and scholarship, academics and athletics*
- *Faculty quality: disciplinary/scholarly excellence that complements and supports the teaching excellence*
- *Study-abroad opportunities*
- *Co-curricular opportunities*
- *Professional programs within the liberal arts environment*
- *Relatively wide range of educational/curricular/programmatic opportunities*
- *Athletics programs enhance the residential experience, and for the most part do not detract from the educational experience*
- *Quality of the residential life experience, range of residential life opportunities*
- *Substantial financial aid resources*
- *Excellent computing, classroom technology, and library resources*

2. What practices, priorities, structures, and resources limit the value, effectiveness, or distinctiveness of our educational programs and outcomes?

- *Lack of diversity among our faculty, staff, and students*
- *Insufficient focus on internationalization (e.g., no foreign language/culture requirement)*

- *Common Learning Agenda is outdated and constraining*
- *Student discomfort with quantitative reasoning*
- *In some areas insufficient institutional benchmarking is performed*
- *Insufficient time for some faculty to devote to scholarship and teaching due to large service obligations, especially for tenured faculty*
- *Geographical location of our campus and the associated isolation effects*
- *Insufficient data gathered on our students (i.e., need more assessment)*
- *Faculty role in University governance needs to be re-prioritized*
- *Insufficient funding for full-year sabbatical leaves*
- *Insufficient funding for summer scholarly and curricular development grants*
- *Insufficient funding for undergraduate student research programs*
- *Insufficient funding for faculty professional travel, including funds in deans' travel budgets and international research travel*
- *Insufficient support for faculty with special needs (e.g., insufficient daycare opportunities in the local area, spousal employment issues)*
- *Lack of institutional support for pedagogical scholarship (i.e., a need to consider broader models of faculty scholarship)*
- *Outdated institutional learning objectives*
- *Study-abroad participation and opportunities need to be increased*
- *Current class size distribution has significant variance*
- *Adjunct faculty teaching foundation seminars*
- *Insufficient numbers of 100-level courses for students in some areas*
- *Grade inflation/compression*
- *Problems with how students are introduced to Bucknell by admissions tour guides*
- *Large numbers of student clubs and organization. These opportunities may encourage students to leave little time for other forms of intellectual engagement outside of class*
- *We do not understand well student commitments beyond time spent in classes and labs*
- *Apparent lack of intellectual activity beyond the classroom*
- *Lack of coordination in scheduling academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities on the Bucknell campus*
- *Are we attracting through current admissions practices students who are truly interested in intellectual pursuits*
- *Students tend to be preoccupied with obtaining credentials*
- *Many students do not read outside of class assignments*
- *Differing expectations between faculty and students regarding out-of-class preparation*
- *Questions about the uniformity of rigor of courses across the entire curriculum*
- *Lack of student awareness of and engagement in national and international developments (the "Bucknell bubble" effect)*
- *Bucknell tends to hire faculty mostly at the entry level – should there be more flexibility in making strategic hires?*