

CCI faculty & staff -

A week ago Friday, more than thirty of us participated in our day-long retreat. It was a terrific conversation, one that brought out both the commonality of purpose and the diversity that make our College so exciting. I really appreciate the time and energy you invested in the College. It's great to work with you all!

While I am still digesting the results, and awaiting the report to the Provost from the Academic Advisory Committee, I would like to share with you some of my initial thoughts, and would like to hear yours. I think that our retreat conversation will serve as a good foundation for both our fundraising and our efforts to further develop the college.

1. One of the goals of the retreat was to distill many of your responses from the questionnaire into a more cohesive set of statements that reflect the College as a whole. I appreciate your willingness to engage in the atypical process that we used, and thank you for making it work. The results of that process are contained in the attached transcription of the retreat notes. (For those of you who weren't there, early in the day, each of us conducted three-minute interviews of six other people on six of these questions. Everyone was involved, as both interviewer and interviewee, and we gained valuable information that we can build on.)

2. While the question about "What should we put on our 'shopping list' for prospective donors?" applies most directly to our retreat goal, I think many of the responses will be valuable in making a convincing case for external investment in the college. I will be working with our development team to adapt the retreat results to our efforts to engage and involve outsiders in our work. Thanks for contributing ideas that we can use in our development campaign.

3. There was an emerging consensus at the retreat that we should "Invest faculty and resources in a few high profile research areas" while "Continuing to strengthen existing programs." I appreciate the guidance you provided here, and believe that this strategy will enable us to build on our strengths, lead to increased national prominence, and help us create our future. I also appreciate our discussion about the question of which research areas we should invest in, and their distillation at the retreat into the two to seven areas. The two broad themes - "Information, Government, and a Democratic Society" and "Human-Computer Interaction" reflect much of our research and serve as a focal point for moving forward (although we should have further discussion about the actual terms we use for these). More about this in a separate note.

4. The poll at the end of the retreat reiterated our commitment to undergraduate education. The initial recommendations from the Academic Advisory Committee contain a similar thrust. Developing new undergraduate opportunities in computing and information should be among our top priorities, and one for which I will seek external support. For example, we should all start thinking about the content for a new General Education course, "Computing & Information 101." I look forward to working with you all on these programs.

5. I enjoyed my time with you at the retreat. We do great things when we get together, and we hold a lot of promise for the university, our students, and the state! Following on your suggestions from the retreat, we should make "getting together" less of a challenge. To facilitate our conversations, we have created a new college-wide faculty email discussion list. This email was sent using the

new "CCI-Faculty" list and I would encourage you to reply to the list with your comments. We should continue to explore and adapt computing and information technologies to meet our own needs. And while I respect the reservations many of you have about our "getting together" physically, we should prepare ourselves for a new home on the Harriman Campus. We will soon put together the faculty committee to anticipate and address these issues and figure out what we need to make the Harriman Campus work.

While these strike me as the "big" outcomes from the retreat, there were many additional ideas and practical suggestions. For example, there was a strong sentiment to implement "centralized academic advisement." You also expressed a need for increased administrative support for research and grant writing, and I will work with the chairs to figure out how to provide this. More on this in a further announcement.

Enclosed are the raw notes from the retreat transcribed from our sheets.

I look forward to our continued discussion and efforts to build community, shape the college, and raise support.

Peter