Notes from Strategic Planning
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Introduction

I began the meeting by explaining how we were going to set about answering three questions based on our vision statement: How do we know the world is being filled with critical, creative, and compassionate thinkers?; How can CU help?; How can we measure CU’s progress toward that set of goals?

Output

People were generally stumped and had trouble answering the first question, instead focusing on the things CU could do to help fill the world with critical, creative, and compassionate thinkers.

First group

• Measuring compassion: outreach, volunteerism, new knowledge, philanthropism, state’s view of CU, number of applications, faculty recruitment and retention.
• At CU: classes oriented more towards problem solving, interdisciplinarity, community projects in classes, infusing compassion into classes, scholarships based on compassion more than on traditional academic metrics.

Second group

• Awareness of what has been done at CU: alums have done in entrepreneurial ways, so have professors.
• Interdisciplinary projects
• Track volunteering

Third group

• Students need to face new things, the unknown
• Compassion is creativity
• Have students all address a common problem
• Address compassion early on in the freshmen year

Fourth group

• Students need to have the willingness to make mistakes

Some questioned the utility of answering the first question, unhappy with the form of the vision statement we were operating under. Instead of a ‘world filled with critical, creative, and compassionate thinkers, they liked the previous statement where it was all about what CU was doing (‘cultivating critical, creative, and compassionate thinkers). The worry was that be proceeding one way and not the other, the discussion would be significantly different than what we may have wanted to get at. After some discussion, we decided to continue with the three questions.
• Connecting what we teach in our classes to how others might react to what we're teaching.
• Students need to learn resilience and flexibility by making mistakes.
• We can monitor discourse in the world to know if compassion is going up or down.
• Teach how to deal with failure.
• Practice their craft in different contexts and genres.
• Survey employers to see what they want.

**Summary of session**

People did focus on how we can train students so that when they go out into the world they will be critical, creative, and compassionate. Most of the conversation seemed to devolve pretty quickly to tactics, ways that we could infuse our teaching with material that would foster creativity and compassion.

**Possible takeaways**

Looking at the summary of the 21st and 28th meetings, here are some possible areas to focus on (my sense is the group is getting ready to drill down):

• Teach with a purpose toward critical, creative, and compassionate thinking.
• The best way to teach these things is to live them in all that we do.
• Allow faculty, staff, and students to explore, make discoveries, and to take big risks.

At the end of the exercise the following point was raised: by focusing on how we might measure a world filled with critical, creative, and compassionate thinkers, we were focusing too much on teaching and undergraduates.