

Leadership Summit
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Strategic Planning Focus Group

Supporting Student Success through Community, Well-being, and Learning

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Session One

What were your thoughts about "the white paper"? Explain some of your experience:

- There was not a lot for Reedies back in the day outside the classroom- though admittedly, much has changed.
- Preoccupation with graduation rate in X number of years
- Alumni stated they would like to discuss: Spirituality, informal learning, service learning for academic credit, performing arts, "the higher education landscape" and where Reed fits in.
- One alumni states: Much of what we learned academically was actually outside of class- the best lessons I learned at Reed were at places like coffee shops and the quad
- What is the data that Reed students are struggling after graduation? Why is everyone complaining about the post-graduation struggle? One alumni states "I left after 4 years here feeling like I could take on the world" (*Karen, '79*)
- Reed has made a very clear effort to create student support- much better counseling. One alumni states: "When I was here, there was not even a full time psychiatrist on staff"

What was missing when you guys were here?

- Expanding of interpersonal skills...social skills (although this is one good thing that conference does for students) What is the *Reed community*?
 - Is it possible to create a community for previously alienated people?
- Student support services – more psychological well being.
- "Reed is an island" was the phrase of the 60s... is it still this island today? Is that even a bad thing?

Priorities:

- How can the new Performing Arts Building be put to use?
- Reed and the Community

- Social Skills & Student Support
- “Life of the Mind”

1. Student Development

- *Social Skills*
 - Keep the academic curriculum rigorous, but making it more practical for the real world – this is one thing that the Thesis does really well. Reed does offer a lot of well-rounded subjects, it *is* happening now, but can we push the curriculum to do more?
 - Reed is all about the method– you learn how to analyze, how to look at social trends.
 - *The Honor Principle*: really an all-encompassing principle that sets Reed apart from any other school
- *Spirituality*
 - “The dead elephant in the room” – (Mark, '70)...how can we revive the spiritual or religious mentality?
 - The chapel is just a community space
- *Student-Professor Relationships*
 - The professors should spend more time in the social areas on campus just to make themselves more available.
 - Reed should market this relationship more because it’s a truly unique and beautiful thing
- Mental Health
 - *Perhaps we should have an alumni-based support group to sort of say: “hang in there”*
(This is one of the more concrete and better ideas to come out of this discussion- agreed upon by all involved!)
 - Alumni Cheerleaders
- An alumni program to assist students in getting off campus

2. Performing Arts

- Great new building and new professors
- This is a great place to “get out of the bubble”...perhaps we should make one performing arts class a *requirement*

3. Service Learning

- Working outside and volunteering provides networking skills and social skills
- We should do more things like Canyon Day (on-campus volunteer help) but also we should consider doing an outside Reed student volunteer program.
- Support more independent studies that work to do external outreach

List of concrete ideas from this group:

1. Alumni "cheerleading" group
 - i. Alumni that want to provide support to current Reed students
2. Improved mental health program services
 - i. increase in full-time staff
 - ii. increase communication about health services as well as mental health services
3. Requiring a Performing Arts class
4. Service Learning for credit
5. Find a spot on campus to support religion and spirituality

Session Two

Alumni stretching from '57-'85 and parents of current students

What were your thoughts about "the white paper"? Explain some of your experiences:

- One alumni says: "As a physics major in the '60s, I wondered, when is there time for any other stuff?"
- Our focus in the 60s was almost exclusively about the classroom. There wasn't as much anxiety about finding jobs, graduating in a certain amount of time. Are students spending as much time on academia? Are they too concerned with career-training?
- Students want a greater level of interdisciplinary focus
- Let's start to create a place for creativity and flexibility to emerge
 1. Let us create student groups that discuss the issues at hand
 2. Professors should take a crash-course on what is available at Reed (and outside)
- Old Reed did not encourage an environment to participate in activities beyond the campus. The formal requirements should be re-looked upon to adapt to Reed's ever-changing socialability

1. Study Abroad

- Shorter faculty lead trips over the summer

2. Let's develop a "Plan of Study" program

- Put a greater focus on your adviser
- Encourage more flexibility
 - Develop more double-majors? Back in the '60s, you could do two majors and only write one thesis.

- “Allied fields” are one way that Reed has toyed with this idea
- However, we must be careful not to be interdisciplinary just because we want to say we are “interdisciplinary”
- As long as there is support for people to come forward with new interdisciplinary ideas, then that’s an improvement.
- Reed does a great job laying down the foundational learning

3. Student Initiative

- Should students have to advocate so much for themselves? Or could Reed institutionalize some of these ideas?
- Self-Advocacy: is this encouraged for international kids? One alumni states: As a host parent, the idea of self-advocacy is confusing and intimidating... we need to be careful of assuming that students have these muscles already in place.

4. The “Solution Booth” Idea

- A group of people are there for problem solving either once a week, once a month or once a semester
- How can we make solutions more accessible to *all* students?
- It might be a relief to not have to go to the alumni office, the SU, etc. but just to have some answers right there.

5. Exit Interviews

- Why is it that students are choosing to leave?
- What is with the graduation rate? Are student voices being heard?

6. Reed Alumni Connections for Internships

- There should be a navigator on campus who directs students to internships, self-avocation techniques, etc. who also work directly with alumni

7. Faculty and Student Resources Cross-Training

- What can the faculty learn from people like House Advisors? Strategic planning persons?

A List of Concrete Ideas:

1. A more flexible system in regards to Study Abroad and Double-Majors
2. Exit Interviews for all leaving students
3. Specific student groups for experiences on campus
4. Train advisers to know more about Reed’s resources (cross-training)
 - A crash-course for all advisors
5. Connecting alumni for internship opportunities