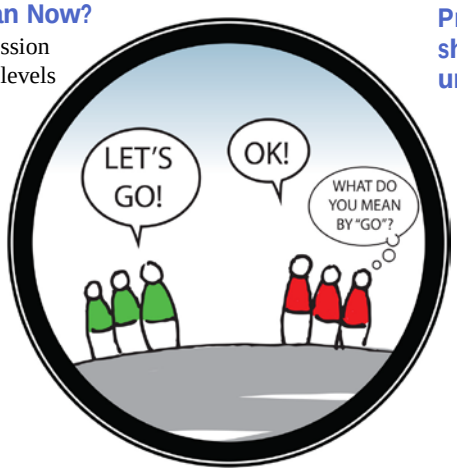
Foreseeing Our Future: Strategic Planning for the Library and Information Technology Collaborations at Hamilton College

Glynis Asu, Carolyn Carpan, Bret Olsen, Nikki Reynolds, Maureen Scoones

Why Create a Strategic Plan Now?

- Ambiguity about our mission
- Perceptions of different levels of commitment
- Dysfunctional communication patterns
- Desire to improve partnership

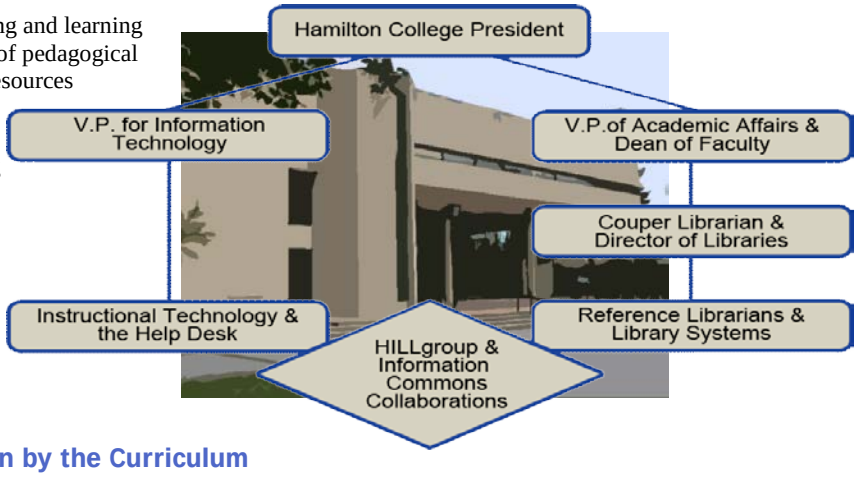


Preamble: People were encouraged to share their "bubble text" (previously unspoken concerns)

- Effect on our (separate and pre-existing) services
- Being "present" (involved) – was this voluntary?
- Lack of strategic planning experience
- Was there freedom to express what is not working?
- Need for engagement by all members
- Ability to make informed choices
- Would we invest our time to have the process "dead end"?

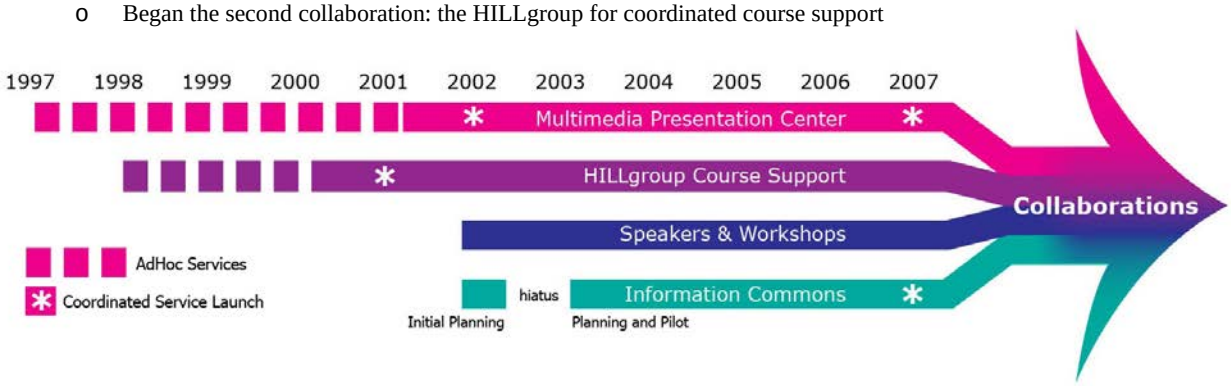
Campus Environment

- Liberal arts college with an open curriculum
- 1800 students, 200 faculty
- No center or program for teaching and learning practice or for the development of pedagogical uses of technology and digital resources
- Our reporting structures are separate
- But we live in the same building



Current Collaborations are Driven by the Curriculum

- Multimedia Presentation Center first
  - Support student use of digital media in the academic program
- Sophomore seminar pilot provided additional opportunities
  - Interdisciplinary course required for all students and all academic departments
  - Capstone project required public presentation by students
  - Began the second collaboration: the HILLgroup for coordinated course support



ACRL poster presentation, March 2011; EDUCAUSE presentation, October 2011; document updated April 2012

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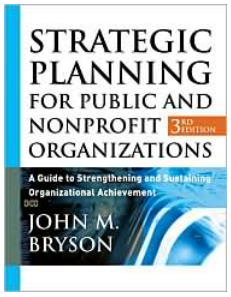
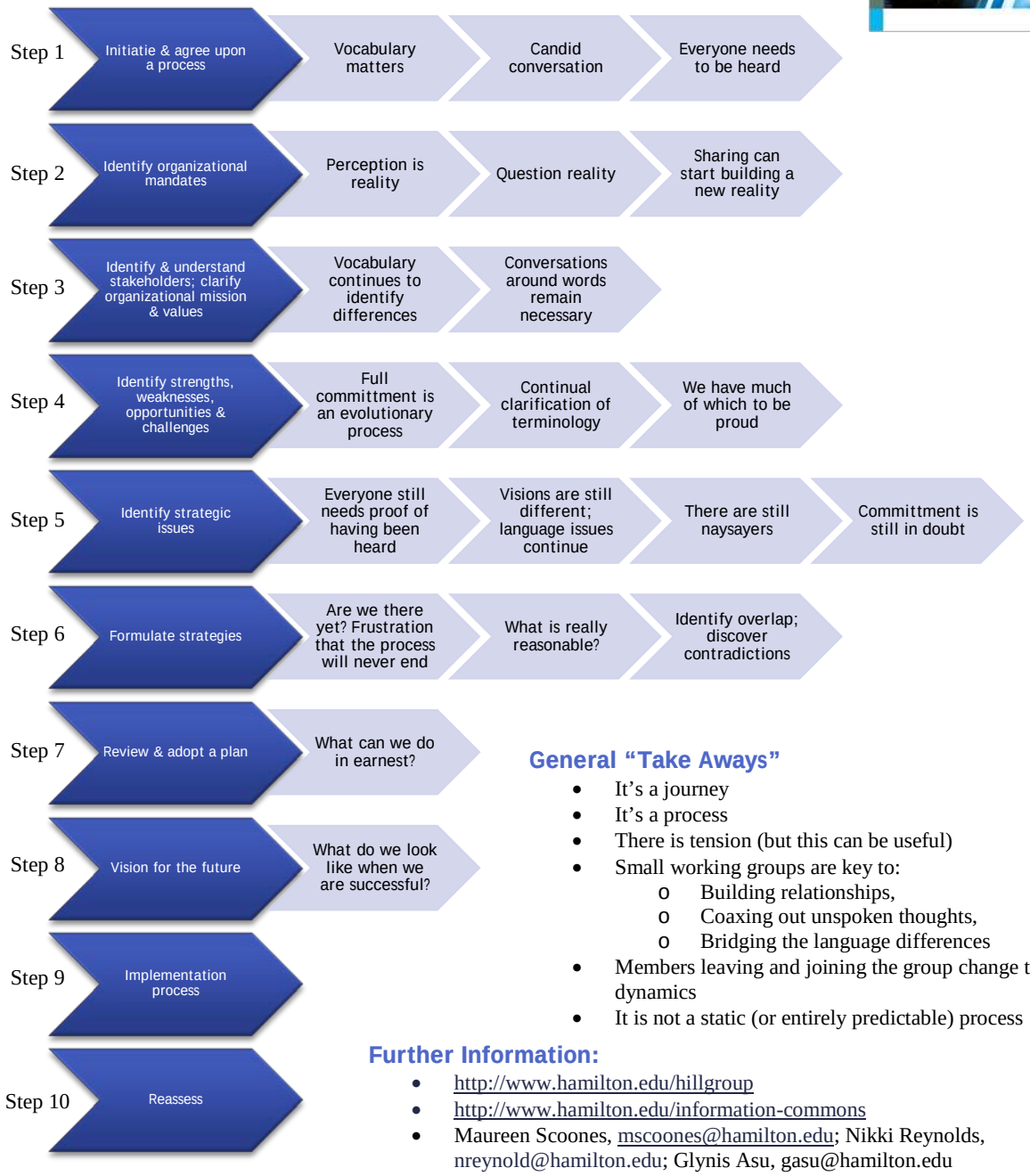
Embarked on a 10 Step Process

Based on: Bryson, John M. *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations: a guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement.* 3rd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004



- We have a draft plan
- We've been taking the time to do this while continuing all of our existing services and collaborations
- We're trying to formally include a third partner: the Oral Communications Center



General "Take Aways"

- It's a journey
- It's a process
- There is tension (but this can be useful)
- Small working groups are key to:
  - Building relationships,
  - Coaxing out unspoken thoughts,
  - Bridging the language differences
- Members leaving and joining the group change the dynamics
- It is not a static (or entirely predictable) process

Further Information:

- http://www.hamilton.edu/hillgroup
- http://www.hamilton.edu/information-commons
- Maureen Scoones, mscoones@hamilton.edu; Nikki Reynolds, nreynold@hamilton.edu; Glynis Asu, gasu@hamilton.edu

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