Roadmap to the SIS Board of Visitors meeting

October 31 – November 1, 2011

Welcome to the 2011 meeting of the School of Information Sciences Board of Visitors. We will open this year's meeting with an opportunity for Board members to meet some of our PhD students and discuss their work in a poster session on Monday (12:00 noon – 3:00) on the 5th floor of our building. A light lunch will be available. Following the poster session, we will update you on the state of the School and on progress since our 2010 meeting.

A reception follows at the University Club (a 10-minute walk), where Provost Beeson will join us at 5:30 to discuss the state of the University and give the charge to the Board. Dinner will be served at 6:15 pm.

Tuesday, we will reconvene over breakfast at 8:00 am and begin our meeting in earnest at 8:30. Given the Board's encouragement that the School develop a 5-year vision to shape its strategic plan, we are going to engage the Board, SIS faculty, and PhD students in a morning workshop to review, revise, and extend the visioning work we have done to date. Mike Eisenberg will facilitate the workshop. Mike is the founding dean of the Information School at the University of Washington (see http://faculty.washington.edu/mbe/ for more information about Mike). I have placed a number of documents related to our vision work on the Board website at http://www.sis.pitt.edu/~sisbov/ (userid & password are both sisbov). I encourage you to familiarize yourself with these materials prior to the meeting, and will suggest here specific documents that I think you will find particularly useful as a start.

One of the resources we have found helpful is an article that appeared Feb.1, 2011, in *Inc.* entitled "Creating a Company Vision" (http://www.inc.com/magazine/20110201/creating-a-company-vision.html) by Ari Weinzweig. This led us to his book *Zingerman's Guide to Good Leading, Part 1: A Lapsed Anarchist's Approach to Building a Great Business*. Books by Burt Nanus (e.g., *Visionary Leadership: Creating a Compelling Sense of Direction for Your Organization*) are also relevant.

A good place to begin is with the "School of Information Sciences FY 2012 Update". In this document you will find a synopsis of the School's progress and plans, as well as benchmarking data that compare SIS to a number of our peer iSchools. Following that, I encourage you to read the "Observations" documents. In these documents, the School's academic leadership reflects and responds to a common set of questions related to changes, challenges, opportunities, and risks.

All of the remaining materials are provided as reference. They include:

- The report of the ad hoc committee on strategic visioning
- A compilation of faculty responses to the following set of questions:
    - What are the major factors in your discipline that are currently shaping its long term, strategic evolution?
    - What is the impact of these factors? Why are they so important? What difference do they make?
    - How do these factors affect the future of SIS and your program?

- o How can the School respond most effectively to these factors?
- o Who are the necessary partners that would need to be engaged in order to respond effectively?
- o What would an effective response look like and what difference would it make?
- A presentation I delivered to the Provost, Institutional Advancement, and the Capital Campaign consultant Martin Grenzebach related to the transformative potential of a major gift.
- An alumni relations & development progress report from Institutional Advancement.
- A copy of the 2012 annual plan submission to the Provost and the Provost's response.
- A copy of last year's Board of Visitors report
- The manuscript of Michael Spring's book *The Digital Information Revolution: The Era of Immediacy*

The driving questions for this Board meeting include:

- What should the iSchool at Pitt aspire to be by 2016… what is its strategic vision?
- How can its strategic vision distinguish it among the iSchools?
- What resources are required to achieve its vision and how might these be acquired?

I look forward to an interesting, creative, and productive meeting.

Ron