

Campus Plan Update Focused on Academic Buildings (June 2008)

As we approach the conclusion of the campus plan of 2000, the Buildings and Grounds Committee has asked us to look into the possibility of a “mini master plan.” This follow-up planning exercise would focus on an evaluation of our older academic spaces and take into account (1) the new classroom and office spaces constructed in the past decade, (2) the impact of the strategic plan and other developments in pedagogy on our teaching, learning, and office space needs, (3) uses of technology in classes, course work, and research/creative work, (4) issues related to the Burling Library and (5) accessibility.

The process would entail an assessment of the space implications of the growth of the faculty (as a result of the EKI, other growth, and the need to house a growing SFS contingent) and an evaluation of the stock of existing classrooms (number, size, and quality). We are particularly aware of faculty concerns about the adequacy of teaching spaces to serve our Social Studies and Humanities programs and will want to focus special attention on these. Related to the review of classrooms will be the need to explore teaching methodologies, including how we use and expect to use digital technologies in teaching and research, and spaces to support the arts. A second special area of focus will be Burling Library and the significant changes taking place in the ways in which it supports the mission of Grinnell College. This element of the follow-up plan will build on the 2004/05 library study.

We have asked the architectural firm of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson & Abbot to help us define what a campus plan follow-up might entail. (SBRA helped develop the 2000 campus plan.) Should the committee recommend that we proceed with the planning process, we expect to establish a campus-based planning group of representatives from the office of the Dean of the College, faculty, library and ITS, and the student body.

Tentatively, a time line of activities includes:

- Late summer 2008 visit to SBRA by a small group of B&G and campus representatives
- October 2008 presentation on planning process to B&G Committee by SBRA
- Fall 2008 update of teaching and learning study, assessment of classroom utilization
- Spring 2009 classroom and library needs study and review
- Summer 2009 scenario development and phasing plans
- Fall 2009 report