

COLLEGE OF BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

# Message From Dean Cheng



Hi everyone,

As we approach the Thanksgiving break and the end of the quarter, it seemed like a good time to reflect on the fall quarter so far. I'd like to celebrate that we have reached major milestones in both of our two initiatives this year - EDI and Strategic Planning.

The decision to run the EDI initiative in parallel with the strategic planning initiative has shown to have the anticipated benefits. Since EDI was one of the first priorities to be identified, proceeding immediately allows us to build the shared meaning around our EDI goals - especially those goals that support the strategic planning goals. It also gives us helpful frameworks and tools to work through the strategic planning process, expanding our intercultural capacity to engage across our disciplinary and other boundaries. Julius's recent visit marked a major milestone in the EDI initiative. He shared information based on focus groups, surveys and IDI assessment and presented CBE's collective goals and our group IDI score. Those two elements form the foundation of the training that will be most effective for our college. More information is coming soon for those who missed the sessions, want to see a video recap and/or wish to take your individual IDI, or want to plan for the next IDI training, which will take place on January 13 and 14, 2020.

As Julius and I reported to our UW sponsors, not only did we have a high percentage of participants, responses mirrored the college faculty and staff population in departmental areas, proportion to faculty and staff, and faculty rank. The majority of the respondents have been at the college for more than seven years, indicating that we will gain from a deep understanding and excellent perspectives in the college. I know it has been taxing to track so much activity and a bit hard to know what is being asked of you and where you can have the greatest impact, so thank you for your patience and persistence in signing up and showing up for so many of the activities!

Another milestone was reached recently, we have a fantastic set of teams around the strategic planning effort, evolving from the first group known as 'Plan to plan the plan' to the Facilitation Team and now adding the Task Groups and their leads. The level of engagement has been so high that we are confident that these groups represent the

college voices and, through their connections, will seek input from the full range of stakeholders for our college. The strength of having the facilitation team and consultants ensures meaningful dialogue will occur among these many diverse interests. Starting this phase of Task Group and their engagement of others marks a major milestone. Click [HERE](#) to stay informed on the progress of our strategic plan.

In my first academic year, it's very exciting to see several key College working teams emerging:

- As you heard, the Associate Dean team is now complete, I'm pleased with the complementary expertise among Vikram Prakash, Carrie Dossick and myself. Between us we have a range of research methods, teaching approaches, personal networks and higher ed experiences and this diversity will be an asset for the College. Searches for chairs of three of the departments (Architecture, Construction Management and Real Estate) are on-going. One of the great benefits of all this activity are the discussions identifying the opportunities and challenges faced by the college as well as bringing focus to themes of leadership, collaboration, and collective impact.
- Another team that is beginning to take shape is the group that will lead marketing, communications and advancement. Erika Harris is starting this week as Communications Director, and she will have the opportunity to build her team adding to the larger group that Alex Haslam is leading. Over the course of the next few months, we expect that the roles within the Marketing, Communication and Advancement team and how they meet the needs of the college will become more clear.

A few announcements on [BE and McKinley studios](#), [space changes around CBE](#), and the [student survey](#) from last year are linked below.

Thank you again for a great start to the academic year, best wishes for a wonderful long weekend break!

-renee

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