Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the Executive Committee for a new student-focused design and innovation center for our campus.

Last fall, Chancellor Wise and I charged a Sesquicentennial Design Building Planning Committee (Illinois 150) to develop a concept and vision for a new building, where students could come together to think, learn, and work – across disciplinary boundaries – on ideas and projects that express their talents, inspire their imagination, motivate their ambition, and provide them with skills for success and fulfillment in their lives. The vision developed by that group, expressed in the attached white paper under a temporary working title, is compelling, and some of our major donors have responded enthusiastically to that vision. With strong donor support, it is now time to translate that vision into reality and move ahead to provide this exceptional opportunity for our students.

The planning team will involve two working groups and the executive committee. Charges for each group are outlined below. I ask that you start work immediately, and do as much of the initial planning as possible by May 15, 2015. Your appointment will continue until the new building is built and the program launched, which we hope will be in Fall 2018.

The Executive Committee will provide overall guidance and oversight of the project. Specific tasks for this committee are:

1. Coordinate the efforts of the Program Working Group, the Facility Working Group, and the architects.
2. Ensure that all planning efforts are consistent with the original vision, and also support the campus goals of fostering innovation and providing transformative learning experiences for our students.
3. Monitor the project timeline to ensure that the whole project moves ahead promptly.
4. Provide advice on whether or not this activity should seek formal status as a Center or Institute, as those terms are used on our campus. Associate Provost Kristi Kuntz can brief you on campus expectations and approval processes for formal centers and institutes.
The **Design Center Program Working Group** will be chaired by Prof. Andrew Singer, will shape the programmatic activities of this new center. This group will consider questions such as:

1. **What types of activities and programs, both structured and unstructured, will the center offer and support?**
2. **How will students be attracted and engaged?**
3. The original vision suggests a focus on extra-curricular learning, driven by student interest and passion. **How should the center activities relate to academic courses and curricula?**
4. **What opportunities should there be for faculty engagement with the center?**
5. **What equipment, tools, and technologies should be available in the center? How will students learn to use them effectively and safely?**
6. **How does the program design inform the types of spaces that are needed (e.g., workshops, design studios, meeting spaces, storage, office).** Your input on these points to the Facility Working Group will be critical, and will be needed very soon.
7. **How can the center serve as a hub or headquarters for student collaboration, design, and making across campus? How can other, existing facilities connect to the center, so that we avoid needless duplication of equipment and enhance the effectiveness of all such facilities on campus?** In this regard you may want to catalog existing facilities, their major equipment, and the ways students can access the facility.
8. **What staffing is needed to support the program? If the center should have a director, what skills and background would we want the director to have?**

The **Design Center Facility Working Group** will be chaired by Dean Ed Feser, and will represent the campus in the design of the building. This group will play a critical role in creating an iconic building that both serves students directly and becomes a hub for other collaboration/design/construction facilities around campus. Working with the architects, this committee will:

1. Help determine what types of spaces the building should have, and their adjacencies. You should coordinate closely with the Program Working Group on this task.
2. Advise on the overall design and appearance of the building, its grounds and its landscaping, including how the building fits into the campus and relates to nearby buildings.
3. Ensure the infrastructure will adequately support the type of work and activities identified by the Program Working Group.
4. Ensure the design is aligned with campus sustainability efforts and LEED standards.
5. Ensure ADA and life safety needs are identified and incorporated into the design.
6. Consider telecommunication and utilities needs appropriate for the spaces within the facility.
7. Incorporate appropriate media (A/V) in meeting/work rooms.
8. Identify and select appropriate furniture, fixtures, and equipment for each type of space in the facility.
9. Consider not only the necessary interior spaces, but potential exterior spaces that may serve the functions of the facility.

I am deeply grateful for your time and expertise in this important endeavor, and look forward to your contributions.

Sincerely,

Ilesanmi Adesida
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost