

University Strategic Planning Process

Phase I

Development of the Strategic Plan by the Strategic Planning Team:

Step 1: Preplanning and Organization

- Work with all stakeholders to continually improve the strategic planning process.
- Develop and implement a data collection system that utilizes best practices, interviews, focus groups, etc.
- Determine organizational resources needed for the strategic planning process.
- Provide leadership and support the Divisions throughout the strategic planning process.

Step 2: Environmental Scanning

- Continually assess changes and trends in the external and internal environment that may have an impact on the future of the University such as technological, pedagogical, social and demographic, economic, political, higher education trends, etc.
- Collect relevant data at regular intervals through such things as:
 - Examining best practices of other universities and paying particular attention to assessments by national and international organizations.
 - Conducting interviews and focus groups with stakeholder groups on and off campus to solicit input on trends affecting the University, perceptions of the University's strengths and limitations, and the future direction the University should take.
 - Administering instruments and surveys to the stakeholders.

Step 3: Clarification of Vision, Mission and Core Values

- Ensure that the values of the University are clearly stated and widely shared.
- Ensure that the mission statement clearly defines the University's purpose.
- Ensure the vision of the University identifies its preferred future, assuming no constraints.

Step 4: Analysis of Trends and Identification of Key Strategic Issues

- Identify and analyze the external trends affecting the University.
- Assess conditions inside the University and any changes that are in process or are expected.
- Conduct a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) and identify priorities and strategies in light of the external and internal trend analysis.

Step 5: Formulation of Priorities and Strategies

- Identify the University priorities (4-6).
- Establish the strategies (4-6) needed to accomplish the University priorities. The strategies represent the major directions the University wants to take.
- Develop target objectives that represent specific intermediate events that will lead to strategy fulfillment. Target objectives must be specific, feasible, measurable, results oriented and time bound.

Step 6: Development of a *University Strategic Planning Document*

- Once the priorities, strategies, and target objectives are developed, the Strategic Planning Team drafts a *University Strategic Planning Document*. This includes an introduction and discussion of trends and challenges; the vision, mission and core values, priorities, strategies and target objectives; guidelines for implementation of the strategic initiatives; and a commitment to continuous planning and evaluation. This is a document that will be distributed among the stakeholders and explains the process and the future direction.
- Board of Trustees approves *University Strategic Planning Document*.
- This document will be done every five years or sooner based on progress, threats and new opportunities.

Step 7: Measurement and Continuous Improvement

- Submit an annual *Strategic Planning Progress Report* to the Board of Trustees by June 1.
- This report recommends any needed changes to the *University Strategic Planning Document*.

Phase II

Development Strategic Plans by University Divisions:

Step 1-5: Division Priorities and Strategies

- Following a similar process to that identified in Phase I, Divisions of the University develop 4-6 priorities aligned with University priorities that lead to specific strategies and immediate directions for the Departments/Units.
- There should be 4-6 Division strategies that drive Department/Unit Initiatives/Action Plans. These strategies are aligned with the *University Strategic Planning Document*.

Step 6: Development of a *Division Strategic Planning Document*

- Once the priorities, strategies, and target objectives are developed, the Division drafts a *Division Strategic Planning Document*. This includes an introduction and discussion of trends and challenges; the vision, mission and core values, priorities, strategies and target objectives; guidelines for implementation of the strategic initiatives; and a commitment to continuous planning and evaluation. This is a document that will be distributed among the stakeholders and explains the process and the future direction.
- The *Division Strategic Planning Document* is sent to the Strategic Planning Team for review of alignment, comment, and final approval.
- This document will be done every five years or sooner based on progress, threats and new opportunities.

Step 7: Division Implementation

- Implementation is the bridge to action that brings the plans to fruition. It begins with the development and prioritization of a series of detailed, scheduled action steps and includes assignment of responsibility, identification of resource requirements, establishment of a time frame for implementation, as well as methods for measuring progress.
- The implementation phase entails group agreement to work together, share resources and support the approved plans. Divisions will need to make decisions about how to prioritize, generate, allocate and reallocate resources to fund the strategic initiatives based on their

strategic priorities.

Step 8: Continuous Planning

- Strategic planning is a process, not an act. The Division's strategies and objectives statements need periodic monitoring of progress, updating and revision to address changes in the external and internal environment. Establishing a structure such as an annual planning retreat can help maintain momentum and build commitment to continuous planning.
- Each Division will submit to the Strategic Planning Team an annual *Division Strategic Planning Progress Report* by March 30 of each year.

Phase III

Department/Unit Initiatives/Action Plans

Step 1-5: Department/Unit Implementation

- Following a similar process to that identified in Phase I, Departments/Units of the University will develop specific action plans for each strategy and objective area in the *Division Strategic Planning Document*.
- The Department/Unit must develop and prioritize a series of detailed, scheduled action steps with assignment of responsibility, identification of resource requirements, establishment of a time frame for implementation, as well as methods for measuring progress.
- This phase entails group agreement to work together, share resources and support the approved plans. It requires making decisions about how to prioritize, generate, allocate and reallocate resources to fund the Department/Unit strategic initiatives based on priorities.

Step 6: Continuous Planning

- The Department's/Unit's strategies and objectives statements will be monitored by the Division leader to assure progress in achieving specific actions.
- Division leaders will adjust Division strategies and make recommendations to the University Strategic Planning Team for needed changes to the *University Strategic Planning Document*.