STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS GUIDES

STEP 1: ESTABLISH INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

This step involves defining the nature of the institution as a background for the strategic planning process. The nature of the institution is represented by its mission statement, vision statement, institutional goals, indicators of performance, and program and services structure.

A. Does the mission statement reflect what the institution represents and provides to its constituency (the institution's basic philosophy and values)?

B. Do the institution's basic goals represent the overall aspirations of the institution?

C. What is the institution’s vision of its future relative to the field of higher education?

D. What are the key measures or indicators of institutional performance in accomplishing its goals?

E. Does the institution's general program and services structure provide a sound basis for the development of the institution's goals?
STEP 2: IDENTIFY STRATEGIC ALTERNATIVES WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH DATA (STRATEGIES)

This step involves identifying the specific trends and events that are likely to occur in the future and affect the institution positively or negatively. Strategic opportunities are identified for the trends and events that have high probability and high impact on the institution. These strategic alternatives are integrated in a framework of strategic priorities.

Note: Steps A, B and C usually follow a short discussion of the external and internal research and environmental scan information.

A. Identify the trends and events within the issue categories, considering both threats and opportunities as well as the potential levels of impact -- national, state, regional, or local.

1. What are the political/governmental conditions (e.g. federal, state, local) affecting the institution?

2. What are the demographic/social conditions affecting the institution?

3. What is the economic environment affecting the institution?

4. What is the educational environment affecting the institution (e.g. vocational, professional, and higher education)?

5. What are the competitive conditions affecting demand for the institution's services?

B. Determine the degree of impact and the probability of impact for each trend and event and select critical trends for further analysis

C. Use brainstorming to generate possible strategic alternatives and formulate potential strategic opportunities
STEP 3: IDENTIFY STRATEGIC ALTERNATIVES WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF EXISTING PLANS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS (STRATEGIES)

In this step, additional strategic opportunities are identified through reviewing existing plans and research projects containing initiatives recommended for development and implementation. Key strategies are integrated into a framework of strategic priorities, objectives, and activities.

A. Review the plans, research projects, and studies recently developed by the institution and extract the key strategic directions and initiatives

1. Educational Master Plan

2. Enhanced Self-Study

3. Technology Plans

4. Listening Sessions Recommendations

5. 1999 Self-Study

6. 1997 Strategic Plan

7. Facilities Master Plan

B. Organize and integrate the strategies that are similar to each other, group similar strategies under strategic objective statements, and create a framework of strategic priorities
STEP 4: REVIEW AND CONSOLIDATE STRATEGIC ALTERNATIVES

This step involves developing a set of strategic priorities embracing the strategic alternatives identified in the planning process steps. Strategic objectives are organized within the strategic priorities and specific initiatives or activities are related to the strategic objectives.

A. Review the aggregated strategic opportunities, including objectives and activities, to determine the overall strategic framework and potential content for the strategic plan.

B. Combine all objectives and activities within the framework of the strategic priorities.

C. Review the combined strategies to identify and formulate additional strategies that may have been missed.
STEP 5: ASSESS ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

This step is an identification and evaluation of the institution's resource capabilities in relation to carrying out its stated mission and goals. The relative strengths and weaknesses are assessed -- what the institution is good at and what it is not good at.

A. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the institution in each of the resource categories

1. Human resources of the institution
2. Financial resources of the institution
3. Physical facilities of the institution, including bond-funded resources
4. Managerial resources of the institution (e.g. planning, marketing, leadership)
5. Operational aspects of the institution (e.g. service delivery)
6. Other aspects of the organization

B. Formulate recommended strategies to align resources with the requirements of the emerging strategic directions
STEP 6: MAKE STRATEGIC CHOICES (DECIDE)

This step involves conducting a strategic analysis of the alternatives identified previously. First, criteria are specified for weighing the strategic alternatives. The various alternatives are then examined for congruency on the basis of matching the institution's strengths and weaknesses, its mission and goals, and the projected risks and opportunities in the environment. The best alternatives are selected; the unproductive alternatives are eliminated.

A. Determine which strategic alternatives or strategies offer the best fit for the institution

1. Consider the criteria for assessment and tentatively select alternatives
   a. consistency with mission and goals of the institution
   b. contribution toward vision of the institution's future
   c. responsiveness to trends and events identified in the environmental analysis
   d. consistency with analysis of institutional resources

2. Consider the timing of each tentatively selected alternative based upon anticipated changes

B. Review the alternatives that are not likely to be very productive and examine possible adverse effects of rejecting them; eliminate the least productive alternatives

C. Decide on the mix of strategic options to be selected
STEP 7: ASSESS ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS (IMPLEMENT)

The final step of the strategic planning process is to incorporate the strategic options into the strategic management process. The strategic profile is re-examined and organizational implications of the options are assessed. A schedule of activities and responsibilities for implementation is determined. A monitoring and evaluation plan is also established.

A. Review the institution's strategic profile for possible additions and modifications

1. Mission Statement
2. Institutional Goals
3. Vision Statement
4. Programs and Services Structure
5. Performance Indicators

B. Assess the organizational implications for implementing the selected strategies

1. Organizational structure
2. Human resources
3. Fiscal resources
4. Physical resources
5. Managerial and operational resources
6. Other implications

C. Develop a schedule of activities and determine responsibilities for the development of action plans

D. Develop performance measures for the strategic objective outcomes and milestones for the strategic alternatives to be included in the monitoring and evaluation section of the plan