Strategic Plan Focus

- To provide vision for the future
- To enable us to adapt to actual or potential changes
- To guide decision-making
- To articulate distinctiveness or differentiation opportunities for the organization

The strategic planning process is feedback-rich: internal and external constituents & partners play a key role.
Key Elements of a Strategic Plan

- **Vision**: The envisioned future state of the organization
- **Goal**: The *big idea/issue/opportunity* your organization would like to tackle
- **Strategy**: *How* you will achieve the goal
- **Critical Tasks**: *Key actions* needed to make the strategy possible
- **Tactics – Action items**: *Specific, incremental steps* needed in order to achieve the critical tasks
- **Indicators of success**: *Measurable* metrics that indicate progress toward the goal
Example from 2016-2021 UI Strategic Plan

✔ Goal: To perform high-impact research

✔ Strategy: Create a university ecosystem that enables the UI to be an international leader in confronting the grand challenges of the 21st century.

✔ Critical Tasks:
  • Invest in research centers and infrastructures, (prioritize infrastructures) that make collaboration natural, sustainable, and seamless.

✔ Tactics (Action Items)
  • Work with the DSP to implement mechanisms to identify grant contributors, assign credit and make collaborations more easily identifiable
  • Establish a process to greatly expand our nominations for national awards. Include a central mechanism to identify awards, a process to create highly successful nominations, and to provide feedback to nominees.

✔ Indicators of success
  • Example: Implement new credit assignment workflow by beginning of FY ’21.
Elements of a Healthy Strategic Plan

✅ Analytical Assessment of Current Situation
  ✅ Review data available and collect data to address gaps
  ✅ Data may be qualitative or quantitative (survey results, curricular outcomes, budget, disciplinary standards or comparisons, focus groups or narrative feedback, SWOT analysis, and so on)

✅ Overarching Issues
  ✅ What are the gaps between where you are now and where you want to be in the future?
  ✅ What are the opportunities for your unit to distinguish itself?
  ✅ What are your unique contributions or potential contributions?

✅ Key Strategic Priorities for Closing Gaps
  ✅ Consensus on clear priorities guides action in the context of daily work
Unique Aspects of Strategic Planning in Higher Education

**Consensus:** Business models of strategic planning are often “top-down” vs. emphasis on shared governance and participatory planning in higher ed.

**Value system:** We are not only focused on a “bottom line” but on educating people, advancing research, creating knowledge, and bettering our communities.

**Customers:** Business focuses on customers, while our constituents are diverse and include students, the public, the State of Iowa, national associations, funders, donors, Regents, legislators and more.
Unique Aspects of Strategic Planning in Higher Education

✓ “The university is a loosely coupled system of units that need to work together for a mutually beneficial future…”

✓ “Designing a loosely coupled process recognizes the uniqueness of each part of the university.”

What makes this strategic planning process different?

- Themes from colleges will drive the institutional conversation (not “top down” but “bottom up”)
- Themes from the colleges will enable better identification of opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and gaps that need to be addressed
- This approach will be more effective at identifying areas of current distinction or those that are ripe for distinction
An iterative, feedback-rich process

Typical Roles of a Strategic Plan Development Group:

- Review data and conduct SWOT analysis
- Identify opportunities for future distinction
- Identify issues that must be addressed
- Synthesize feedback from community
- Draft/revise plan (may have a writing group or a lead writer)
Steering Committee formed

Conduct SWOT analysis, review current plan, identify opportunities

Community engagement via listening sessions

Community engagement via existing collegiate/organizational committees

Steering Committee drafts plan and submits to President/Provost

Feedback about current plan, areas of focus, opportunities for distinctiveness, issues to address

Draft plan due by February 3rd, 2020

Final plan submitted to President and Provost

Final plan due by May 1st, 2020

Steering committee with 7-11 members, including co-chairs and organizational/collegiate shared governance

Collegiate/VP Unit Strategic Plan Development Process
The University of Iowa Strategic Plan Development Process

Collegiate/Org Draft Plans Submitted (February, 2020)

Analysis of high-level themes and opportunities shared with colleges and organizations

Strategic Plan Development Group (SPDG) drafts v1.0 strategic plan

Community Engagement

SPDG finalizes plan and metrics

Final institutional Strategic Plan submitted to Board of Regents

Provide a focused template to capture:
• Faculty/Staff/Student Recruitment and Retention Goals
• Student Success, Research & Discovery, DEI, and Engagement Goals
• Facilities
• Revenue

Strategic Plan Development Group (SPDG) gathers community feedback:
• Town Halls
• Road Shows with constituents
• Online

Final Collegiate/VP Unit Plans Finalized
UI Strategic Plan Development Timeline

2/3/20
First draft of college/VP unit plans submitted to President and Provost

UI Strategic Plan Development Group (SPDG) identifies themes and opportunities across college/VP unit plans

February-March, 2020

5/1/20
Final draft of college/VP unit plans submitted to President and Provost

April-August, 2020

SPDG holds campus forums to gather input

2/1/21
Draft of UI strategic plan provided to Board of Regents

February-April, 2021

SPDG solicits additional campus feedback (forums, meetings, online) and finalizes plan

6/1/21
Board of Regents approves UI Strategic Plan

7/1/21
2021-2026 Strategic Plan implementation begins
Each day the students, faculty, and staff at the University of Iowa expect excellence from themselves, their colleagues, and classmates. It is through high expectations that new and exciting knowledge is acquired daily on the UI campus through groundbreaking research, scholarship, and relationships.
Our Strategic Focus

Student Success

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Research and Discovery

Engagement
Our Big Gaps (Institutional)

- **Student Success**
  - Graduation Rates
  - Educational Support

- **Research**
  - Diversifying beyond Human Health
  - National Academy Members

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
  - Faculty and Staff Training
  - Executing the Action Plan

- **Engagement**
  - Developing our Intellectual Property
  - Beyond Johnson County

Institutional Gaps
Discuss: How does your unit contribute to addressing these institutional gaps?

Also consider administrative gaps (e.g., administrative burden that may detract from time for research, teaching, & engagement)
Steps for Strategic Planning

1. SWOT analysis
2. Gap analysis
3. Identify opportunities, areas of focus
4. Translate opportunities, strengths and gaps into goals and strategies
5. Solicit feedback
6. Create a vision for the future
7. Iterate goals and strategies based on insights
8. Identify critical tasks to enact strategy
9. Share draft of plan with stakeholders for feedback
10. Finalize plan based on insights
SWOT Analysis

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

Discuss: Share a couple of insights you gained from your SWOT
Gap Analysis

Discuss: What is a gap you see between where your college/unit is and an opportunity you would like to actualize?

STEPS IN A GAP ANALYSIS

Identify the current state
Identify where you want to go
Identify the gaps
Bridge the gap
Examples of questions to solicit feedback

- In what ways does the draft plan demonstrate our unique contributions?
- What is missing?
- What are the most important issues our plan must address?
- What might we need to stop doing in order to address new opportunities?

Discuss: What additional questions might you use to solicit feedback on your college/unit strategic plan?