

University of the West Strategic Plan [2.2]

By the Strategic Plan Working Group, March 16, 2015

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Identity

University of the West (UWest) has educated students since 1991, first offering courses in English as a Second Language and Buddhism. We were founded in 1990 by Venerable Master Hsing Yun of the Fo Guang Shan order of Taiwanese Buddhism and moved to our current campus in Rosemead, CA, in 1996, where we expanded to offer degrees in General Studies, Business Administration, and Religious Studies. Since February 16, 2006, UWest is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). In 2008, we began to enroll students in Psychology and Buddhist Chaplaincy programs. In 2015, UWest serves around four-hundred students international and domestic students in four undergraduate, four masters, and two doctoral programs, plus English as a Second Language, non-degree, and continuing education programs. As of 2015, we are sixteen full-time faculty, over thirty adjunct faculty, and over fifty staff. UWest is a private, nonprofit, non-sectarian, co-educational university that welcomes students of all religions (and none), races, ethnicities, nationalities, genders, ages, orientations, and abilities. Nurturing talent through education is one of the core purposes of Fo Guang Shan that UWest seeks to uphold as a unique American institution.

Mission

The mission of University of the West is to provide a whole person education in a context informed by Buddhist wisdom and values and facilitate cultural understanding and appreciation between East and West.

Vision

UWest will model Whole-Person Education through engaged and interdisciplinary learning in all programs; an exceptional, caring faculty and staff who fulfil our unique mission; and service projects seeking to improve local and global communities. UWest graduates will practice social responsibility, value diversity, and pursue lifelong learning and spiritual growth. UWest will be a widely recognized name.

Values

UWest instills the values of Character, Compassion, and Community in its students, programs, and business practices.

Goals Framework

Over the next five years, UWest will pursue five inter-related goals. Each goal depends on the other four and each goal derives its impetus from a central “hub” goal concerned with the mission, identity, and overall culture of the institution as a place for learning and human development. The “spokes” set goals for distinct, but interdependent, operational areas of the university including academic programs, physical facilities, financial realities, and faculty desires. Each goal aims at a particular aspect of the Vision 2020, which is largely concerned with how students experience their academic and co-curricular programs, interact with faculty and staff, and develop into persons of strong character and compassion who serve their communities and continue to grow long after they have graduated. UWest’s vision to become more widely recognized will attract more students to UWest, bring in the best faculty and staff, and, thereby, enable us to better fulfill our mission.

Hub & Spoke Relationship between Institutional Goals



The relationship between campus culture and each of the other four strategic goals and their strategies should be carefully considered under the following criteria:

1. How is this goal consistent with the mission and vision of UWest?
2. How does this goal fulfill the values of Character, Compassion, and/or Community and how are they incorporated into its strategies?
3. How does this strategy demonstrate care for the people who make up the UWest community? How will the community be involved or impacted?
4. What are the outcomes of this goal in which UWest can take pride? How will they be visible?

Hub: Campus Culture of Pride & Care

UWest takes pride in its identity and cares for its people. Between now and 2020, we will strengthen a campus culture of *care* based on our mission and values in which each community member takes *pride*.

Campus culture (often called ‘organizational climate’) predicated both satisfaction and institutional effectiveness. It positively influences student success from decisions to apply and initial enrollment, through retention and graduation. Satisfied and committed employees improve the student experience in all aspects. Engaged students learn better and give back more to their communities and alma matter. This goal is primarily concerned with the growth and development of the employees of UWest, particularly staff (see Spoke 4 concerning Faculty). **Care** for our people and **pride** in our identity relate directly to the institutional values of Character, Compassion, and Community and is written into the Vision 2020. Organizations with employees who perceive that they are cared about and take pride in their work more successfully accomplish challenging goals and improve the quality of work life and commitment level of all of their constituents, in other words, our employees, students, their parents, donors, and the local community.

Strategy 1: Build a community of dedicated employees and students through on-campus events.

Annual Cost: \$2,000 (includes w/s support)

Develop: 2015/2016

Implement: Fall 2016

Responsibility: HR & IEPO

Strategy 2: Boost local recognition and care for the community through off-campus service events involving employees and students.

Annual Cost: \$4,000 (includes w/s support)

Develop: 2016/2017

Implement: Fall 2017

Responsibility: HR & IEPO

Strategy 3: Systematically review, revise, and streamline policies, procedures, and practices to promote autonomy, accountability, and service to students (i.e. student-centeredness).

Annual Cost: no cost

Develop: Summer 2015

Implement: Fall 2015

Responsibility: IEPO & all departments

Strategy 4: Show gratitude to employees through annual awards and rewards and regular recognition.

Annual Cost: \$2,000 (includes w/s support)

Develop: Summer 2015

Implement: Fall 2015

Responsibility: HR & IEPO

Strategy 5: Encourage strategic thinking and engagement from all employees through professional development and workplace policies.

Annual Cost: \$1,000 (includes w/s support)

Develop: 2015

Implement: Spring 2016

Responsibility: IEPO

Strategy 6: Benchmark pay and benefits against agreed upon industry standards for all positions on a regular cycle and set goals for achieving parity or near-parity. Expand non-financial employee benefits whenever possible to make UWest a great place to work.

Annual Cost: TBD

Develop: 2015/2016

Implement: 2017/2018 & ongoing

Responsibility: Exec. Team, HR, Cabinet, & BOT

Spoke 1: Four Academic Pillars

UWest promotes its mission and values through a unique Four Pillars approach to education by linking interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary learning, study abroad opportunities, service, and contemplative education to engage students in all programs.

Interdisciplinary learning integrates knowledge and practices from more than one academic discipline to explore topics or solve problems. **Cross-disciplinary** learning engages students with courses in disciplines outside their degree major that also support their career goals. **Study abroad** allows students to learn and earn degree credit in cultural communities beyond their own. Cross-cultural learning experiences will engage students for whom study abroad is not possible. Participatory, compassionate, and reflective course-based **service learning** is required for all undergraduates and encouraged for graduate students. Practices such as meditation and other **contemplative** disciplines (religiously and artistically based) build character and infuse learning with experiences of awareness, insight, and compassion for oneself and others throughout the academic curriculum. These pedagogies build on existing strengths and are proven effective for students. They can be enacted both in the curriculum and through cross-curricular programs and student services.

<p>Strategy 1: Revise the Institutional Learning Outcomes to support the four pillars of inter/cross-disciplinary education, study abroad and cross-cultural education, service learning, and contemplative education in all academic and co-curricular programs.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: none Develop: 2015/16 Implement: 2016/17 Responsibility: Mission & Identity Committee</p>
<p>Strategy 2: Integrate interdisciplinary courses, service learning, and contemplative education into the General Education curriculum for most undergraduate students and revise the General Studies major to involve more interdisciplinary work, possibly as an IDS degree.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: TBD Develop: 2015/2016 Implement: 2016/17 ongoing Responsibility: Chair of GE/GS w/IETF support</p>
<p>Strategy 3: Develop community service as an aspect of professional practice opportunities for at least half of all graduate students, such as internships, practica, and clinical placements.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: TBD Develop: 2015/2016 Implement: 2016/17 ongoing Responsibility: Deans of AA & SA, Dept Chairs, Career SC</p>
<p>Strategy 4: Leverage existing international relationships and partnerships to offer study abroad opportunities to at least a quarter of domestic students, particularly undergraduates, through both curricular and co-curricular options.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: TBD Develop: 2016/17 Implement: 2017/18 Responsibility: Deans of AA & SA, & Int'l Exchange Ofc</p>
<p>Strategy 5: Support faculty to implement the Four Pillars through hiring, professional development in related pedagogies, and revised policies to reward interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary, contemplative, and service learning teaching & research. (See related S4 under Faculty Growth.)</p>	<p>Annual Cost: none (already budgeted) Develop: Summer 2015 Implement: Fall 2015 ongoing Responsibility: APCC & IETF</p>
<p>Strategy 6: Expand inter/cross-disciplinary opportunities in graduate programs, such as certificate programs that bridge existing departments or interdisciplinary classes and projects.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: none (use existing courses) Develop: 2015/2016 Implement: 2016/2017 Responsibility: Integrated Education Task Force</p>
<p>Strategy 7: Improve spiritual and contemplative education with a concentration for undergraduates, a certificate for graduate students, co-curricular programs that support contemplative practice for ongoing spiritual formation, and research into contemplative studies and pedagogies.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: TBD Develop: 2015/2016 Implement: 2016/2017 Responsibility: Integrated Education Task Force</p>

Spoke 2: Physical Beauty, Safety, & Sustainability

Become a more desirable physical place to study, learn, live, and work through the triple strategies of beauty, safety, and sustainability.

The quality of one’s physical environment has a major impact on both first impressions and long-term satisfaction. Therefore, the quality of UWest’s facilities and environment are important to its growth, status within the local community, and ability to retain happy students, faculty, and staff. UWest will care for its people by providing facilities that are **beautiful, safe, and sustainable** from functional, financial, and environmental standpoints – facilities all can take pride in.

<p>Strategy 1: Empower an inclusive and transparent Facilities Committee to take a more active role in assessing campus needs, prioritizing projects, developing proposals (RFPs), recommending contractors, and monitoring the maintenance and capital improvement budgets.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: none Develop: 2015 Implement: 2016 ongoing Responsibility: Facilities Committee</p>
<p>Strategy 2: Create a standardized inclusive process on a regular annual cycle by which projects are proposed, evaluated, and prioritized using data-driven and rubric-based criteria (including beauty, safety, & sustainability criteria).</p>	<p>Annual Cost: none Develop: 2015 Implement: 2016 Responsibility: Facilities Committee</p>
<p>Strategy 3: Prioritize high-impact, low-cost projects with a good return on investment that support the growth of the campus by appealing to new students, particularly residents. Fill the residence halls by 2020 to create vibrant on-campus student community.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: already budgeted (no increase) Develop: 2015 Implement: 2016 Responsibility: Facilities Committee</p>
<p>Strategy 4: Work with experienced consultants and experts on larger capital improvement projects to ensure quality, sustainability, and supplement in-house knowledge and resources.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: retainers for firms Develop: 2015 Implement: 2016 Responsibility: Exec. Team & Facilities Committee</p>
<p>Strategy 5: Raise donor funds to pay for large capital improvement projects through coordinated campaigns and naming honors. Create a strong community of donors who take pride in UWest's facilities.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: \$20K (ROI within 2 years) Develop: 2016/2017 Implement: 2017/2018 or beyond Responsibility: President's Office</p>
<p>Strategy 6: Encourage and empower a proactive professional in-house team to enhance campus facilities and grounds. Encourage employees to care for the campus as their community and take pride in its physical spaces.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: none (already in budget) Develop: 2015 Implement: 2016 Responsibility: General Services</p>

Spoke 3: Financial Stability & Self-Sufficiency

Raise other sources of revenue to become 60% financially self-sufficient, with a 40% Board of Trustees contribution by 2020, and balance budgets every year.

UWest already has a long history of financial stability and consistently balanced budgets, but has been historically reliant on contributions from its major donors to keep tuition costs low. This has resulted in an advantageous market position (lowest tuition of any private four-year institution in California) that has bolstered enrollment growth, which means revenue growth, which means re-investment into growth-supporting strategies. UWest will capitalize on this growth cycle over the next five years to **increase self-sufficiency while maintaining financial stability**. Enrollment growth and tuition revenue will comprise the major vehicle for this effort, but development of alternative sources of funding, including new donors, alumni, and grants, will also be explored. Students will enjoy the benefits of this growth, as UWest becomes a livelier and more diverse place to study and live, physically, academically, and through enhanced services and co-curricular programs.

Strategy 1: Increase enrollment to 700 students (600 FTE) by 2020 with a 60% or higher undergraduate mix. Pursue enrollment growth (see Enrollment Management Plan) through domestic and international (50/50) undergraduate recruiting and improved retention rates in all programs.

Annual Cost: already budgeted*
 Develop: 2015
 Implement: 2016 ongoing
 Responsibility: Enrollment Mng Team & Retention Cmt

Strategy 2: Raise tuition rates and fees slightly faster than inflation (5-9% annually) to increase revenue and outpace costs while remaining affordable for as many students and their families as possible.

Annual Cost: net gain
 Develop: 2015/2016
 Implement: 2016/2017
 Responsibility: Executive Team

Strategy 3: Maintain student discount rate (i.e. institutional financial aid) at or below 30% and maximize financial aid leveraging to enable students to achieve their educational goals while efficiently using resources.

Annual Cost: 30% of tuition & fee revenue or below
 Develop: 2016/17
 Implement: 2017/18
 Responsibility: Financial Aid & Executive Team

Strategy 4: Cultivate other sources of donor and grant revenue by establishing a professionally staffed (i.e. director & support staff) development office. Create a strong community of donors who take pride in UWest's mission, vision, and values.

Annual Cost: \$70-150K salary (ROI within 5 years)
 Develop: 2015/2016 search
 Implement: 2016/17 or later
 Responsibility: President's Office

Strategy 5: Control costs and balance budgets through careful budget monitoring and strategic investment in growth-supportive areas that maximize return on investment. Use data-driven decision making strategies and standardized analytical metrics.

Annual Cost: neutral or net gain
 Develop: 2015
 Implement: 2016 ongoing
 Responsibility: Cabinet Members

Strategy 6: Utilize creative organizational and administrative models to maximize efficiency and cost savings. Capitalize on and invest in employees' strengths in creative ways.

Annual Cost: TBD (none?)
 Develop: 2015
 Implement: 2016
 Responsibility: President's Office & Exec. Team

*2013 *Cost of Recruiting an Undergraduate Student* by Noel-Levitz shows recruiting costs for the smallest third of private, four-year institutions range from \$1,447 to \$3,006 per student (no breakdown of domestic vs. international students). UWest enrollment goals calculate to \$130-270K in 2015/16 and increasing \$25-52K per year through 2020/2021. Current budget and staff (including open positions) should be sufficient to achieve recruiting goals through 2020, but may not fully account for cost of international recruiting.

Spoke 4: Faculty Goal

Develop the full-time faculty pool to a desirable target through systematic hiring, workload, and tenure policies to support more classes taught by these faculty, particularly at the undergraduate level, in order to better engage and support students.

UWest will **increase its number of full-time faculty** in order to better serve students through a stable and secure foundation for its programs and the overall academic culture. Full-time faculty members can better engage with campus culture and institutional values and are more mission-oriented. Therefore, they can better fulfill UWest's mission and values and pass these on to our students. Full-time faculty members are also more available to students outside the classroom: course assistance, mentoring, and research. They can also provide more service to the university through committee work and shared governance and enhance the reputation of the university through their scholarship and service. UWest will **support its faculty**, full-time and adjunct, to implement the Four Academic Pillars (Spoke 1) by creating complimentary faculty policies for hiring, tenure, and research, and providing professional development to support new pedagogies.

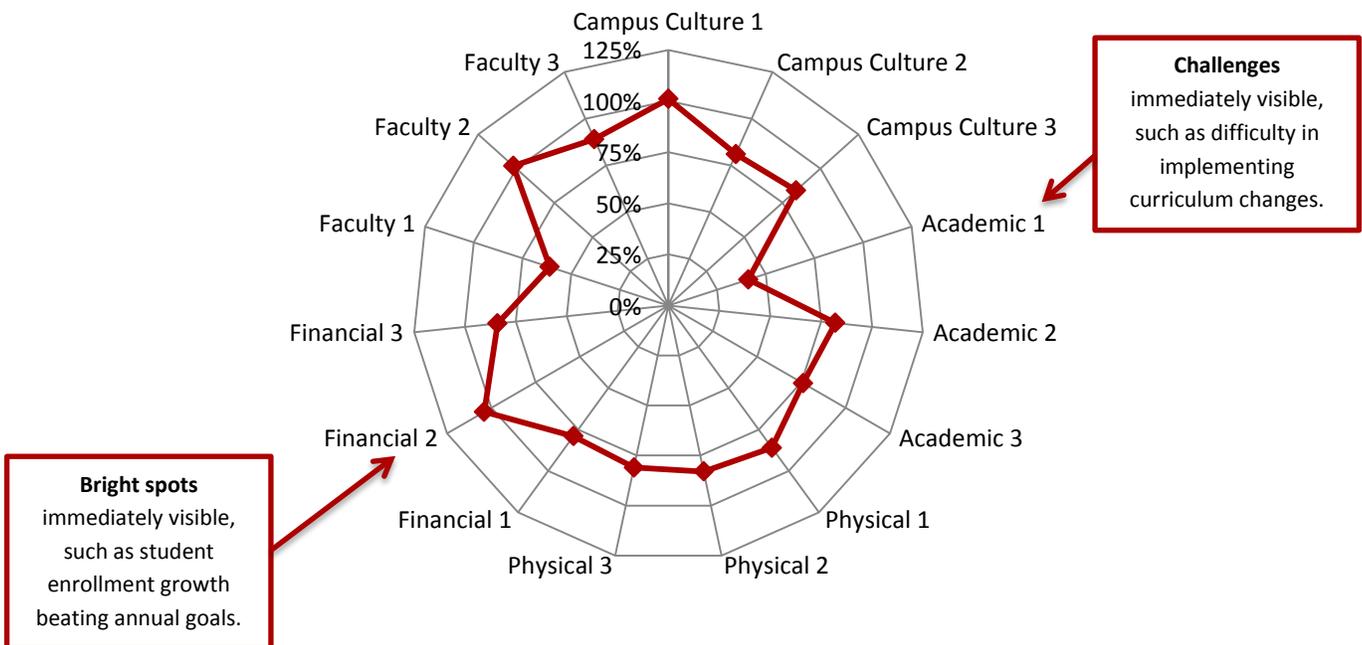
<p>Strategy 1: Grow the full-time faculty in two phases: 1) hire a sufficient base to teach 40% of undergraduate and 50% of graduate courses; 2) thereafter, hire new faculty according to gradually increasing student to faculty classroom ratios with an institutional target of 18:1 (with variation by program).</p>	<p>Annual Cost: \$150K (2 new hires per year)</p> <p>Develop: 2015 develop metrics (see S2-4)</p> <p>Implement: Fall 2016 new hires start</p> <p>Responsibility: APCC & Executive Team</p>
<p>Strategy 2: Create a clear matrix of faculty titles and ranks and commensurate salaries/benefits, evaluate existing full-time faculty, and adjust these faculty member's titles and ranks according to the matrix.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: none (adjustments may have cost)</p> <p>Develop: 2015</p> <p>Implement: 2016</p> <p>Responsibility: HR, Dean of AA, & APCC</p>
<p>Strategy 3: Develop and implement a policy matrix to trigger new full-time faculty hires in each academic department using strategic value, financial, and workload metrics.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: none</p> <p>Develop: Summer 2015</p> <p>Implement: Fall 2015</p> <p>Responsibility: IRAO, APCC, & Dean of AA</p>
<p>Strategy 4: Further develop and standardize hiring and tenure practices through the use of rubrics that clearly evaluate prospects, link hiring to tenure, provide alternatives to the classic research-based, tenure-track posts (such as 'instructor' or 'lecturer' positions), and evaluate adjunct potential. (See related S5 under Four Academic Pillars goal.)</p>	<p>Annual Cost: none</p> <p>Develop: 2015/16</p> <p>Implement: 2016/17</p> <p>Responsibility: HR, Dean of AA, & Faculty Senate</p>
<p>Strategy 5: Make UWest an attractive place to work through clear policies, collaborative governance, research support, professional development, competitive compensation, academic staff support, and honoring the university's unique mission and identity.</p>	<p>Annual Cost: \$20-50K</p> <p>Develop: 2015/2016</p> <p>Implement: 2016/2017</p> <p>Responsibility: ET, Dean of AA, APCC, & Fac. Sen.</p>

Implementation Scorecard

The implementation scorecard monitors progress towards institutional goals using pre-determined metrics and targets. Individual strategies will also have their own metrics and targets, set and monitored by the groups responsible for implementing them, but the scorecard provides an at-a-glance picture of how the university is doing on its five goals.

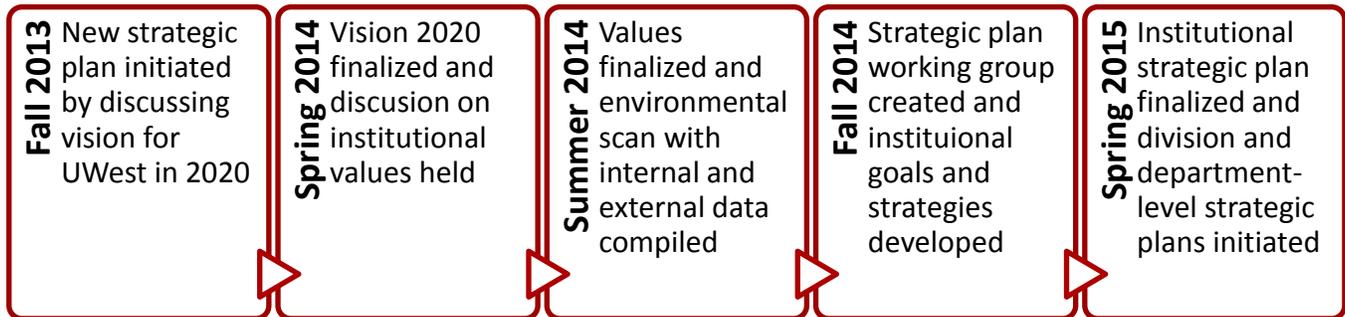
Area	Metric	Unit of Measure	2020 Goal
Campus Culture 1	Employee satisfaction survey, target questions identified	Likert scale	> 4.0 average
Campus Culture 2	Pay and benefits for employees in all positions	% of industry median	> 70%
Campus Culture 3	Participation by employees in UWest community building events (at least 1 event per year)	% participation	> 60%
Academic 1	Undergrad participation in interdisciplinary (cross-disciplinary), service, and contemplative education	% of students	> 80%
Academic 2	Domestic undergrad students who study abroad	% of students	> 25%
Academic 3	Assessment of learning outcomes related to 4 pillars	% meets/exceeds goals	> 80%
Academic 4	Number of active service and study abroad partnerships	Number	> 6
Physical 1	Student, resident, and employee satisfaction surveys, target questions identified	Likert scale	> 4.0 average
Physical 2	Number of students living on campus	% of capacity	> 90%
Physical 3	Actual projects costs & timeframes compared to budget	% of variance	< 15%
Financial 1	Percentage of non-BOT contribution revenue sources	% of non-BOT revenue	> 60%
Financial 2	Student enrollment numbers	FTE	> 600
Financial 3	Audited annual financial statements compared to budget	% of variance	< 5%
Faculty 1	Undergraduate courses taught by full-time faculty	% of courses	> 40%
Faculty 2	Employee satisfaction survey (faculty responses), target questions identified	Likert scale	> 4.0 average
Faculty 3	Student to full-time faculty ratios in the classroom	Average class size	< 18 average

Progress towards 2020 Goals in June 2018 (EXAMPLE)



Appendices

Process Overview



Contributors

- Process designed and implemented by Institutional Effectiveness & Planning Officer (IEPO) Monica Sanford and Institutional Research & Assessment Officer (IRAO) Michael Oertel under the supervision of President Stephen Morgan
- Vision process solicited feedback from all faculty, staff, and students, via Town Hall and various committee meetings. Final Vision 2020 drafted and endorsed by the University Cabinet.
- Values process involved discussion among all faculty, staff, and students via Town Hall meetings and a series of Values Luncheons. Final Values drafted and endorsed by a special open meeting of the Mission & Identity Committee (MIC) with over 30 in attendance.
- Data for the environmental scan compiled by IRAO and reviewed by the Strategic Planning Working Group.
- Strategic Plan Working Group included all executives, academic department chairs, and department heads from Accounting, IT, General Services, Resident Life, Library, Registrar, Faculty Senate, and UWest Student Government representatives.
- Board of Trustees consulted in October 2014 and March 2015 and endorsed progress

Related Documents

- Contributed to process and final plan development
 - BOT Update Oct 2014
 - UWest Environmental Scan
 - Strategic Planning Working Group SWOT Analysis
 - Strategic Goals Drafts 1-4
 - Campus Culture Goal Strategic Development
 - Academic Goal Strategic Development
 - Physical Goal Strategic Development
 - Financial Goal Strategic Development
 - Faculty Goal Strategic Development
 - Strategic Plan Drafts 1-3
- Documents further developed as part of strategic plan goals and strategies **(to be developed)**
 - Enrollment Management Plan (TBD)
 - Academic Department Strategic Plans (TBD)
 - Administrative Division Strategic Plans (TBD)
 - 5-Year Strategic Budget (TBD)