

University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Strategic Planning Report: 2015 – 2020
November 10, 2015

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

- Dr. Melinda Oberleitner, Associate Dean, College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions & Professor,
Department of Nursing (Co-Chair)
- Dr. Vanessa Hill, Associate Professor and Head, Department of Management, B.I. Moody III College of
Business Administration (Co-Chair)
- Dr. Aeve Abington-Pitre, Assistant Professor, College of Education
- Mr. Dane Adams, President, Student Government Association
- Mr. Andrew Benoit, Assistant Vice President, Enrollment Management & Director, Undergraduate
Admissions and Recruitment
- Ms. Rae Brodnax, Development Officer
- Mr. Gordon Brooks, Dean, College of the Arts
- Dr. Jack Damico, Assistant VP of Research
- Ms. Emily Deal, Head of Distance Learning and Online Services, Dupré Library
- Mr. Scott Farmer, Athletic Director
- Mr. Eugene Fields, Chief Information Officer
- Ms. Jane Heels, Graduate Student Representative
- Mr. Ruben Henderson, Assistant Director, Marketing & Leadership, Office of Student Engagement and
Leadership
- Dr. Helen Hurst, Associate Professor and Director, Graduate Programs, College of Nursing and Allied Health
Professions
- Ms. Heidie Lindsey, Associate Dean of Students & Director of Student Engagement and Leadership
- Dr. Susan Mopper, Professor of Biology and Director, Center for Ecology and Environmental Technology
- Mr. Tom Pears, Director, Auxiliary Operations
- Dr. Catherine Roche-Wallace, Assistant Professor, College of the Arts
- Dr. Geoffrey Stewart, Associate Professor, B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration
- Dr. Charles Taylor, Assistant Professor, College of Engineering
- Dr. John Troutman, Associate Professor, College of Liberal Arts
- Mr. Xiang Xiyue, Graduate Student Representative

Executive Summary

The Strategic Steering Committee was charged with developing a five-year strategic plan for Academic Years 2015 – 2020. The members of the steering committee began by considering the current University mission and vision statements. The committee proposed to update the existing statements in order to reflect the growth and transition of the University from a regional university to a nationally competitive research-intensive institution, as designated by our Carnegie Classification. The proposed update is articulated in the first section of this document.

After reflection on the mission and vision of the University, the committee conducted a SWOT analysis that explored our progress toward realizing the strategic goals identified in the 2009 – 2014 Strategic Plan, by inviting subject matter experts to provide updates on advancements achieved within that timeframe in their respective areas. The committee then used this information to conduct a second SWOT analysis to identify areas of strength and weakness, as well as opportunities for growth and factors that threaten the viability of the University's continued improvement.

The SWOT analyses revealed that great progress has been made toward realizing strategic initiatives focusing on student life, leisure, and extra-curricular activities. Significant resources have been invested in improving the facilities and programming related to student life outside of academics. Conversely, facilities and resources related to instruction, research, and the enhancement of intellectual engagement outside of the classroom have not received the same amount of attention and investment. This observation is externally validated by assessments indicating low levels of student academic engagement and low faculty and staff morale. Of particular note, the current status of the University Libraries holdings is a source of extreme concern across strategic areas.

As a result, the committee decided that strategic imperatives that emphasize enriching the intellectual life of the University should be prioritized over the next five years. Members of the steering committee partnered with multiple campus stakeholders and worked in task forces to propose strategic goals that address the weaknesses and threats identified in the SWOT analyses. The SWOT analyses identified four areas of priority:

- **Student** experience as it contributes to academic success
- **Faculty** resources to facilitate teaching, research and service
- **Research** resources that support cutting-edge research and insightful scholarship
- **Governance** structures that will improve the capacity of the administration to prioritize, enhance, and support the academic functions of the university

Subsequent sections of this report identify weaknesses and threats in each area and propose initiatives to address these issues. These initiatives are prioritized in a timeline for completion. The report offers key performance indicators and protocol recommendations for assessing progress. The committee acknowledges the funding challenges associated with achieving some of the targets set for the key performance indicators given the fact that the University of Louisiana at Lafayette has historically lagged well behind its peers in terms of total funding (state funding plus tuition and fees) per student. We recommend that our relative position in total funding be included in annual performance reports on the accomplishment of the strategic plan to provide context for the achievement of key performance indicators. The committee notes that while our Strategic Vision is to be included in the top 25% of our peers institutions, the key performance indicators focus on achieving peer averages in a variety of categories, and we believe that to be a reasonable approach within an appropriate funding model. Finally, the report concludes with suggestions for improving and streamlining the strategic planning process going forward.

Mission Statement and Values

The committee reflected on the current mission statement and concluded that it provides a good foundation and represents an accurate expression and documentation of our history. However, the committee proposes a revision to the statement that reflects the University's evolution from a regional institution and its recent emergence as a national presence that aspires to achieve the Carnegie Classification of "Research University/Very High Research Activity." The committee therefore proposes the following update to the mission and values statements:

Our Mission

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette offers an exceptional education informed by diverse worldviews grounded in tradition, heritage, and culture. We develop leaders and innovators who advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the human condition.

Our Values

We strive to create a community of leaders and innovators in an environment that fosters a desire to advance and disseminate knowledge. We support the mission of the university by actualizing our core values:

Equity: striving for fair treatment and justice

Integrity: demonstrating character, honesty, and trustworthiness

Intellectual Curiosity: pursuing knowledge and appreciating its inherent value

Creativity: transcending established ideas

Tradition: acknowledging the contributions of the Acadian and Creole cultures to this region and to our University's history

Transparency: practicing open communication and sharing information

Respect: demonstrating empathy and esteem for others

Collaboration: understanding our connection with others and working to realize synergies through teamwork and collegiality

Pluralism: believing in the inherent worth of diverse cultures and perspectives

Sustainability: making decisions and allocating resources to meet the needs of the present, while preserving resources for the future

Strategic Vision Statement

In an effort to realize our mission and live our values, the committee proposes to articulate our strategic focus over the next five years by the following statement:

We strive to be included in the top 25% of our peer institutions by 2020, improving our national and international status and recognition.

We identify our peer group for this vision statement as public universities in the category of “Research University/High Research Activity,” as defined by the Carnegie Classification. Furthermore, appropriate performance measures in the categories of student achievement, faculty resources, and productivity in research, scholarship, and creative activities are delineated in the rationale sections that accompany each strategic imperative.

Introduction of Strategic Imperatives

Overview

Members of the steering committee partnered with colleagues across campus to develop strategic initiatives to address weaknesses and to develop opportunities for growth in four areas: Students, Faculty, Research, and Governance. Task forces were instructed to consider and articulate resources and structural changes necessary to achieve their proposed initiatives. All initiatives were to include an examination of the following questions:

- What changes in faculty support and personnel are necessary to enable us to achieve our strategic vision?
- What changes in the student body, student support, and student engagement are necessary to enable us to achieve our strategic vision?
- What changes in the support of research, scholarship, and creative activities are necessary to enable us to achieve our strategic vision?
- What changes in governance are necessary to enable us to achieve our strategic vision?

The following sections describe the strategic imperatives by area (Faculty, Students, Research, and Governance), as well as key performance indicators for each one. The parts of the report that follow this section provide a detailed explanation of each initiative and a suggested timeline for completion.

Strategic Imperatives (SI) related to Faculty:

Create a stimulating academic environment supported by the latest innovations in technology and informed by best practices, in which faculty members can realize their full potential as educators and scholars.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI): Intermediate goals that monitor progress toward the achievement of the strategic imperative. KPIs will be listed after each strategic imperative.

SI 1: Significantly upgrade academic facilities related to instruction in order to meet or exceed the quality of those at peer institutions.

- **KPI 1:** *Within the first year, develop a master plan to evaluate and prioritize upgrades to academic facilities.*
- **KPI 2:** *Increase spending for instruction and academic support to correct significant deficits in these areas and strive to reach our comparison peer averages for instructional and academic support.*
- **KPI 3:** *Equip 90 percent of all classrooms with minimum digital technology: internet access, laptop/computer workstations, LCD projectors, screens, and sound systems.*
- **KPI 4:** *Allocate sufficient funds to increase library expenditures for provision of research and information resources to meet or exceed the average of our comparative peer institutions.*
- **KPI 5:** *Determine and provide the minimum supply budget required by each department.*
- **KPI 6:** *Meet the comparative peer average for maintenance, space allocation, ADA standards, and adjacency to faculty offices for instructional spaces.*

SI 2: Expand faculty staffing to meet or exceed peer standards for student to faculty ratios, choices of course offerings, and faculty diversity

- **KPI 7:** *Reduce the full-time undergraduate student to faculty ratio for students taking traditional curricula to the current comparison peer average of 15:1 and ensure that the staffing for distance learning meets or exceeds the peer average for instruction.*
- **KPI 8:** *Expand the recruitment and retention of new tenured and tenure-track faculty.*
- **KPI 9:** *Ensure diversity and equity in faculty appointments with the aid of the Office for Campus Diversity.*

SI 3: Offer competitive faculty salaries to recruit and retain the best faculty

- **KPI 10:** *Offer salaries competitive with those offered by our comparative peer institutions.*

SI 4: Provide professional development

- **KPI 11:** *Establish a campus center to train faculty in new pedagogical and instructional techniques and technologies that support both traditional and distance delivery of curricula.*
- **KPI 12:** *Provide faculty with the infrastructure needed to observe, evaluate, and provide constructive feedback on their instruction.*

- **KPI 13:** Provide faculty support including but not limited to computing technology, relocation support, travel funding, start-up budgets, and GA/TA assistance that is competitive with institutions in our peer group.

Strategic Imperatives related to Students:

Cultivate a student body that is intellectually curious and civically engaged by developing an infrastructure that ensures student success.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI): Intermediate goals that monitor progress toward the achievement of the strategic imperative. KPIs will be listed after each strategic imperative.

SI 1: Recruit, retain, and graduate outstanding students (undergraduate and graduate; traditional and nontraditional; transfer and returning adults).

- **KPI 1:** Implement and sustain student support to retain and graduate students.
- **KPI 2:** Expand recruitment of high-potential undergraduate and graduate students, which embraces diversity and enhances the university's image nationally and internationally, in both distance and traditional degree programs.
- **KPI 3:** Maximize opportunities for student enrollment and progression in traditional and distance education curricula, including strengthening transfer partnerships with community colleges.
- **KPI 4:** Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices.
- **KPI 5:** Expand and enhance incentives for graduate students' enrollment.

SI 2: Enhance student engagement in co-curricular activities through a vigorous, energetic, and culturally diverse university community

- **KPI 6:** Develop and institute a defined plan/model for co-curricular activity at UL Lafayette.
- **KPI 7:** Implement a co-curricular transcript for all students.
- **KPI 8:** Obtain Carnegie Foundation's Classification for Community Engagement recognition.

SI 3: Increase student productivity and success through engagement in mentored research, innovative projects, and creative endeavors.

- **KPI 9:** Expand support for graduate programs; develop new doctoral programs in areas of graduate excellence and new graduate programs in areas of undergraduate excellence.
- **KPI 10:** Promote a comprehensive chain of research mentoring for graduate students via student-faculty interactions, peer activities, and apprenticeships.
- **KPI 11:** Develop an undergraduate research initiative that will provide research opportunities for all undergraduate students, regardless of major.

SI 4: Expand and strengthen UL Lafayette’s relationship with alumni and the community locally, nationally, and globally, in direct support of student achievement.

- **KPI 12:** Double the proportion of alumni giving to the University.

Strategic Imperatives related to Research:

Foster a stimulating academic environment for all members of the university community that supports the development and advancement of knowledge and creative works.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI): Intermediate goals that monitor progress toward the achievement of the strategic imperative. KPIs will be listed after each strategic imperative.

SI 1: Enhance supporting infrastructure for the conduct of research and innovation-

- **KPI 1:** Ensure that support services are sufficient to sustain the efforts of University researchers.
- **KPI 2:** Provide incentives and training to increase faculty and staff engagement in research and innovation.
- **KPI 3:** Establish a mechanism for tracking unit-level performance metrics.

SI 2: Increase and diversify external funding revenue through grants and contracts, entrepreneurial activities, and fund-raising.

- **KPI 4:** Provide more resources and enhance administrative infrastructure to support procurement of external funding, intellectual property development, entrepreneurial start-ups, and patents.
- **KPI 5:** Invest in research mentoring, and professional development efforts aimed at increasing research productivity.
- **KPI 6:** Collaborate with University Advancement to increase the number of external relationships and explore various opportunities for fund-raising and gifts to support research, graduate education, and entrepreneurial ventures.

SI 3: Expand research programs beyond our existing strengths and take advantage of our historical, cultural, and geographical setting for research and scholarly purposes.

- **KPI 7:** Develop interdisciplinary initiatives leading to the growth and creation of research centers and institutes.
- **KPI 8:** Provide programs and incentives for collaborations across disciplines, including on-going research networks (Communities of Interest) that regularly provide opportunities for researchers to extend their activity outside of their disciplines and colleges.

Strategic Imperatives related to *Governance*:

Institute a system for shared governance based on trust, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI): Intermediate goals that monitor progress toward the achievement of the strategic imperative. KPIs will be listed after each strategic imperative.

SI 1: Establish a shared governance model that facilitates trust, teamwork, and cross-functional collaboration, and aligns all stakeholders to the Vision and Mission.

- **KPI 1:** *Establish an elected, representative body of governance for each of the primary constituent groups on campus: faculty, students, classified staff, and unclassified staff.*
- **KPI 2:** *Establish a University Senate, with representatives from each of the above governance bodies, which will support broad participation in the determination of University initiatives and resource allocations.*
- **KPI 3:** *Connect each stakeholder to the primary and support activities that drive University performance toward achieving the Vision.*
- **KPI 4:** *Provide each stakeholder with a clearly articulated authority structure and method of performance evaluation, with both tied to the Vision and Mission.*
- **KPI 5:** *Align all UL Lafayette committees' mission, membership, and reporting with the governance model.*

SI 2: Provide each level of governance with data analytics capabilities that create a collaborative culture and increase the University's overall impact.

- **KPI 6:** *Build enterprise-wide data analytics capabilities that provide a wide array of performance metrics that are transparent, based on our Vision and Mission, and broadly embraced.*

SI 3: Develop the Human Resources function in support of the Mission and Vision.

- **KPI 7:** *Establish an HR System that will manage all stages of the employment relationship to provide a community of employees focused on achieving the Mission and Vision of the University.*

SI 4: Establish a process for continuous academic and nonacademic professional development.

- **KPI 8:** *Cultivate professional development programming that has a measurable impact on improving pedagogical innovation, managerial effectiveness, and essential job skills in support of the effective operation and governance of the University.*

Detailed Discussion of Strategic Imperatives and Key Performance Indicators

1. Faculty

Co-Chairs: John Troutman & Michael McClure

Task force committee members: Emily Deal, Aeve Abington- Pitre, Karyn Sutton; Joshua Vaughan, Lisa Broussard, and Curtis Matherne

The purpose of this task force is to propose initiatives that ensure a strong faculty that is equipped to teach, research, and meaningfully contribute to the campus and local communities. Proposed initiatives address but are not limited to:

- Academic Facilities
- Faculty Compensation
- Professional Development
- Fully-staffed Faculty
- Financial resources dedicated to instructional resources