

Twelve Peer Institutions – Strategic Plans

and

Significant Findings

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Abstract

“Community the Shared Common Denominator”

Webster’s dictionary describes community as a unified body of individuals, society at large and joint ownership or participation. Words such as common, likeness, and fellowship are often associated with community. It is these themes among university strategic plans and this shared strength of “community” that often brings the most success to university strategic initiatives. While each peer university is determined to attain university specific targets and achievements, it is the common denominator of “community” that stands out as the most sought after principle among our peers.

Benchmarks among all peer universities include emphasis on student retention, graduation rates, research and scholarship, increase in faculty, sustainability, diversity, graduate and undergraduate learning, R&D expenditures, research doctorates, global engagement, and infrastructure. Most provide aspirations to provide superior education and become premier research universities. A few including IUPUI have also focused on staff and faculty, appreciating the foundation that makes the inner workings of a university tick. Some such as the University of South Florida have sophisticated tracking systems that update their achieved results on an interactive dashboard for all to see. But it is “community” in its many definitions that drives the common goals we all share.

The University of Cincinnati simply lists the word “community” as a primary principle in the foundation of their plan. Other institutions, such as the University of Alabama at Birmingham, are focused on community primarily to partner with the state and garner financial support. Temple’s example of hosting a symposium of business leaders in their new “Center on

Regional Politics” is yet another example of how community plays a role in exploring opportunities to solve both community and university shared matters.

While IUPUI is trying to deepen their commitment to community engagement, and the University of Colorado is growing mutually beneficial partnerships that engage local, national, and global communities into their strategic plans, many universities, such as The University of Utah, are simply just focusing on “community” to become more involved in collaboration that helps them achieve their goals. The University of Illinois at Chicago engages in community by improving public health and engaging in partnerships throughout Illinois, The University of Louisville engages in community by bringing national visibility to the region through their sports teams, and The University of Colorado at Denver is able to achieve their vision of community by building the Anschutz Medical Campus along with the relocation of graduate facilities downtown. Community takes on many meanings. It is the way universities access and utilize community significance that allows them to achieve their collaborative results.

In comparing our twelve peer institutions we appreciate many different approaches and targeted initiatives with respect to individual strategic plans, but it is the one shared objective “community”, which remains constant in University strategic initiatives that leads to success and shared achievements.

State University New York

At Buffalo

UB 2020 – “A Framework for Success”

Plans in the Works

- NYSUNY 2020 Challenge Grant – fair and responsible tuition plan allows school to plan on a five year term rather than on a year by year basis transforming the way they invest
 - Investing in Faculty – plans to hire 250 top faculty with Grant over next 5 years
 - Moving the Medical School Downtown – align with partners in community
 - Digital Communication transformation – campus wide branded Web environment

Key Points

- ✓ ***Seek Excellence*** – This has to be our overriding focus, but there are multiple pathways to excellence and local contexts across the university can contribute excellence in particular ways from great undergraduate experiences to great service programs to outstanding discoveries in research.
- ✓ ***Think as ONE institution*** –We can imagine together, across units, what an institutional brand/image/identity might be and make unit plans within that more encompassing identity.
- ✓ ***Enable Innovation*** – Internal and external challenges require creative response beyond incremental thinking to ideas that challenge who we are, what is possible and what best expresses the special talents we have at UB. These innovations should be ahead of their time and reflect a forward-thinking, risk tolerant shift in internal culture. These innovations will be the building blocks of a new and distinctive UB identity.
- ✓ ***Be inclusive*** – The opportunity to hear every willing voice should be afforded and every interested member of the university community should shape new UB directions and understand their role in these efforts.
- ✓ ***Reach beyond building strength to problem-solving*** – New UB directions should build and direct institutional strength to solve important societal and economic problems.
- ✓ ***Develop implementable plans*** – Plans must be achievable in timeframes that create impact ahead of expectations.

A “window of opportunity” is what State University New York at Buffalo will create to implement their strategic plan called UB 2020. They will continue to build upon the strong foundation of research, education and service to achieve their goals. They must take into

consideration however, the differences and also the similarities between themselves as well as their other peer institutions. While we look to our peer institutions to make comparisons and contrasts, we must also consider what other universities are using as benchmarks in order to obtain a complete picture of concepts we may not have considered and objectives we have yet to achieve. In the attached memorandum of understanding The University at Buffalo recognizes that the faculty is the foundation of their university. They further recognize that in order to grow their programs they will need to develop and grow their faculty in order to meet future needs. Their faculty is not large enough to provide them the depth and diversity to make the impact of a larger public university. To compete they will “need to invest in staff as well as infrastructure” to ensure ultimate success for their students. This can be found in the attached memorandum dated May 2007, part of UB2020 (5.2 Faculty development/5.3 Scholarship and research/sponsored activity). <http://www.provost.buffalo.edu/pdf/BuffaloUniversityMOU.pdf>

The University of Buffalo designates peer universities for benchmark purposes but also goes beyond those universities to creating a second category that they call “elite-public aspirant peer universities”. The takeaway from this is they look beyond what they want to become in the immediate future but also where they want to be in the next 15-20 years. I found this to be significant. The peer universities they have listed include University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, University of Washington, and University of Wisconsin Madison. A comparison chart and list of Peer Universities is also included in the attached the memorandum (table 1a p.4)

Temple University

“Academic Strategic Compass” - Debuting New Plan in 2013

IU Chief Financial Officer takes over as Temple’s New President

- Recognized expert on educational finance
 - Innovative thinker
- Chaired a \$1.1 billion campaign at Indiana and loves fundraising
- According to Theobald, “People are attracted to quality” and “Affordable and excellent will do well in any market”
 - Was able to boost IU SAT score from 1096 to 1203
- Past president of the American Education Finance Association

(Plan still in the works – not completed)

New residential and retail complex to accommodate 1200 students in fall 2013 – largest in Temple history

New architecture building that opened in 2011 will allow both college of Engineering and Architecture to expand

Plans for a new six story science and education research facility

- ✓ Serves student from greater Philadelphia and maintains international presence with campuses in Tokyo, Rome and also programs in London, Beijing and six other locations worldwide
 - ✓ Aspirations are to provide access to superior education to students of all backgrounds
 - ✓ New generation of exceptional faculty will be recruited
 - ✓ Focus on expanding the Honors program for undergraduates
 - ✓ Renovation of facilities
 - ✓ Stronger bonds with alumni
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- January 2013 – More than 100 invited government officials and business leaders gathered for a symposium on “Building a stronger Regional Economy – Symposium was hosted by Temple’s new Center on Regional Politics (CORP). Theobald said that “The Symposium illustrates the important role universities play in investigating daunting problems, documenting impressive achievements and exploring exciting opportunities (news.temple.edu/news/2013-01-23)

University of Alabama-Birmingham

UAB 21 – “Our Vision for the 21st Century”

UAB Values

- ❖ *Academic freedom*
- ❖ *Accountability*
- ❖ *Caring and responsive service*
 - ❖ *Collaboration*
 - ❖ *Commitment to excel*
- ❖ *Community involvement*
 - ❖ *Diversity*
- ❖ *Entrepreneurial/can-do attitude*
 - ❖ *Ethical conduct*
 - ❖ *Shared governance*
 - ❖ *Unity of purpose*

UAB Strategic Plans and Goals

Goal I: Transforming Undergraduate Learning

We will provide a student-centered, collaborative learning experience to prepare diverse students for rewarding careers and lives that benefit society and our regional and global economy.

Goal II: Transforming Graduate and Professional Education

We will offer exceptional graduate and professional programs that prepare diverse students to lead, teach, conduct research, provide professional services, become the prominent scholars and societal leaders of the future, and contribute to our region's prosperity.

Goal III: Research and Scholarship

We will expand UAB's capability to discover and share new knowledge that benefits society, spurs innovation, fosters the region's economic development, and further positions UAB as an internationally renowned research university.

Goal IV: Service to Community and State

We will partner with our community and state to improve education, health, quality of life and economic development.

Goal V: Community/Financial Support

We will partner with the larger community to garner financial and other support to achieve our common goals.

Goal VI: Living/Learning/Working Environment

We will create a consumer friendly, positive, supportive, and diverse environment in which students, faculty and staff can excel.

University of Cincinnati

UC2019 – “Accelerating our Transformation”

Core Principles are transforming lives, transforming education and transforming knowledge

Nine Operational Principles

- ✓ Learning
- ✓ Discovery
- ✓ Community
- ✓ Economy
- ✓ Sustainability
- ✓ Global Engagement
- ✓ Diversity
- ✓ Mission-Based Healthcare
- ✓ Collaboration

The University of Cincinnati will measure itself against a set of elite peers represented by the Association of American Universities and the Top Research Universities. They are using the bicentennial to measure their results but are hoping to achieve the results within five years. In addition they will use an annual report card to assess their results. Most of the goals are set to external benchmarks when possible and they are stretch goals that will be continually monitored and updated on an institutional dashboard.

Results are kept on a Report Card to the Board of Trustees which analyzes each of the nine operational principles <http://www.uc.edu/president/priorities/reportcard/2011.html>

UC has a designated website for Distance Learning & Outreach

<http://www.uc.edu/distance.html>

UC announced a revolutionary MOOC2Degree Program where they have expanded their program to allow students to receive credit for a MOOC class if they enroll in a degree program at the university, a first of its kind in education.

Distance learning is a part of the UC's 21st century approach to learning.

University of Colorado
At Denver and Health Sciences Center
“Strategic Plan 2008-2020”

Strategic Priorities

University Strategic Priority 1

Maximize the opportunities of our consolidated university to achieve our vision

University Strategic Priority 2

Deliver an outstanding and innovative educational experience

University Strategic Priority 3

Conduct outstanding research and creative work for the public good

University Strategic Priority 4

Enhance the university’s world-class health care programs to achieve recognition as one of the best academic health centers in the nation

University Strategic Priority 5

Enhance diversity university wide and foster a culture of inclusion

University Strategic Priority 6

Grow strong, mutually beneficial partnerships that engage our local, national, and global communities

University Strategic Priority 7

Secure the resources to achieve our vision while being responsible stewards of those resources

Board of regents make two major decisions that have transformed the university to position itself as a premier research university

- Undertake with our partner in the Fitzsimons Life Sciences District the largest health care and health sciences development project in the country by building the Anschutz Medical Campus (AMC) and relocating the schools of dental medicine, medicine, nursing, pharmacy and the health sciences graduate school
- Consolidate the campus of the University of Colorado in downtown Denver with the campus of the Health Sciences Center to create a single multi-campus university

University of Illinois at Chicago

“Access to Excellence”

UIC is in the process of updating their Strategic Plan. The previous Strategic Plan was conducted during 2004-2005. As part of the new plan the following Vision Statement has been approved:
“A leader among academic institutions improving public health through engaged partnerships in teaching & learning, research, service and practice”

A draft of the new strategic plan will be presented to faculty, staff, and students, April 2013
Draft Strategic Plan shared with external stakeholders, May 2013
Strategic Plan final approval, June 2013

7 Goals

- UIC will offer an outstanding education at all levels to a diverse student body
- UIC will excel as an internationally recognized center for research and creativity by advancing and disseminating knowledge within and across disciplinary boundaries and by translating discovery into application, practice, and the marketplace
- Through our Great Cities Commitment, UIC will engage with the people, communities, and institutions of Chicago and other great cities of the world in ways that transform lives
- UIC will build areas of excellence in disease prevention, health promotion, patient care, education and research within a highly-competitive health care market.
- UIC will be a destination where students, faculty, and staff want to study, work, and live and that attracts visitors from around the world.
- UIC will secure the resources needed to achieve its goals from a wide variety of sources and use those resources wisely.
- UIC will implement a comprehensive marketing and public relations program to increase its visibility and improve its image among key external constituencies.

University of Louisville

The 2020 Plan – “Making it Happen”

Five Critical Areas

- ✓ Educational Excellence – enroll the best and the brightest
- ✓ Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity – recruit 60 new researchers and 30 new scholars in the first 5 years to bring in \$60M in federal research. Increase total peer reviewed federal grants and contracts to \$100M by 2014 and to \$193.5M by 2020
- ✓ Community Engagement – bring national visibility to region through our sports teams focusing on integrity and sportsmanship. Expand boundaries by moving key programs downtown such as the schools’ graduate programs. Partner in the creation of a City solutions Center. Achieve Carnegie Classification for community engagement.
- ✓ Diversity, Opportunity and Social Justice – Expand Cardinal covenant program which guarantees funding to poorest. Increase student participation in international experiences.
- ✓ Creative and Responsible Stewardship – Increase endowment from \$769.8M to \$1.5B in 2014 and to \$3B by 2020. Expand sustainable initiatives. Increase space to reduce the space deficit by 2020. Continue to assess NCAA compliance.

Engaged Learning – The Ideas to Action Program

The Ideas to Action Program adopts critical thinking and problem solving skills. Similar to IUPUI’s rise challenge, all general education courses and the student’s curriculum have active learning embedded in the courses such as research, internships and capstone projects. After completion of a class it allows the student to demonstrate that they have fully achieved the level of learning offered by the course. In addition, the students often connect with community and local businesses to apply what they have learned.

Accountability Examples

U of L has demonstrated accountability by:

Developing a university –wide initiative on critical thinking

Saving millions in operating costs developing cost effective policies

Expanding our distance learning programs by improving technology

Restructuring the undergraduate program to improve retention by partnering with Jefferson Community Technical College

Opening a new building to accommodate doctor’s practices in one convenient location

Moving print shop from a leased space off campus to on campus for a \$60,000 annual savings

University of New Mexico

UNM 2020: “A View to the Horizon”

When UNM began the process of putting together their plan they did so without any concerns on how feasible the plan would be. Instead they engaged more than one thousand Stakeholders over six months to capture what they would all like to see UNM become in the future. The idea was to capture as much information as possible from the community and put together what they might see in an ideal world. ***Over the next 24-36 months they will refine their ideas and then work towards finalizing their strategic plan.*** The 113 page document paints a future picture of UNM. It truly encompasses all points of view and is a true working document directly from the perspective of Stakeholders at UNM.

Principle Areas of Focus in Document

- Teaching and Learning
- Discovery and Innovation
- Students: the Lobo Experience
 - Faculty and Staff
 - Health Sciences
 - Institutional Culture
- Leadership and Governance
 - Strategic Partnerships
 - Market Position and Brand
- Infrastructure and Financial Performance

University of South Florida
“Strategic Plan 2013-2018”

Objectives

During the next five years become...

One of the top 25 public universities in the nation

One of the top 100 global research universities

A leader in improving the quality of community enrichment and increasing employment opportunities in Florida, the US and the global economy to ensure student success

An organization with an even stronger sustainable economic base, built through continued sound financial management

“USF Performance Interactive Dashboard Tool”

USF Performance Dashboard reflecting Median SAT, Student-to-Faculty Ratio, Freshmen Retention, Bachelor’s Degrees, Graduation Rate (6-Year), Research Doctorates, Research Expend/Faculty, Postdoctoral Appointees, International Students, Total R&D Expenditures

<http://www.ods.usf.edu/Plans/PPA/dashboard.htm>

Engagement and Partnerships with Community

CAMLS opened in 2012; USF’s Center for Advance Medical Learning and Simulation in downtown Tampa is a leader in patient care

New MBA Program

In fall 2012, USF teamed up with the Tampa Bay Lightning to launch a new two-year MBA in Sport and Entertainment Management within the college of business

Tampa Bay Educational Partnership

USF with Hillsborough County Public Schools develops educational partnership K-12

University of Utah

“Seven Core Commitments of the New U” – Phase I

David W. Pershing was inaugurated October 25, 2012 as the 15th president of the University of Utah. He began with the University as a professor of chemical engineering in 1977. He became dean of the college of engineering in 1987. He was named senior vice president of academic affairs in 1998.

Core Commitments

- Student Success and Engagement
- Research and Teaching Excellence
 - Diversity
- The pursuit and practice of sustainability
 - A collective global vision and strategy
 - Building community
 - A broadened sense of leadership

Phase II includes:

- The Strategic Vision
- Action items for fulfilling the seven core commitments
 - Metrics for benchmarking and measuring success

Ranked #3, 2011 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a Go Green Campus”

Ranked #2, 2011 of U.S. News and World Report Specialty of Assistant Physician Training

Ranked #22, 2011 by U.S. News and World Report Biomedical /Biomedical Engineering

Virginia Commonwealth University

“Quest for Distinction” – 2011-2017

Discovery. Impact. Success.

VCU’s strategic plan embraces their vision as a premier urban, public research university focused on student success. The university board has approved a master site plan that will allow new construction in conjunction with its strategic plan. This will allow them to close the gap between VCU’s downtown campuses and add needed laboratory space. Master plan includes:

- ✓ New academic research and support space
- ✓ Redevelopment of Franklin Street Gym as new home for College of Humanities and Science
 - ✓ Thalhimer Tennis Center to support academic and research programs
 - ✓ New school of education
 - ✓ Enhanced presence for the School of Arts in the Broad Street Corridor
- ✓ Redevelopment of the 500 Academic Centre for academic space, housing and parking
 - ✓
- VCU is one of only 40 institutions nationally to receive Carnegie designations as Research University – Very High Research Activity and Community Engaged.
- Over the next six years it will be important for VCU to embrace its designation as a community engaged institution, but this must also occur at the unit level. Each academic unit must figure out a way to foster a culture of community. Currently VCU does not track data on community engagement. They must find ways to connect the community with university partnership opportunities.

VCU Themes

- I. Become leader among national research universities
- II. Attain preeminence as an urban, public research university by making contributions in research, scholarship, creative expression and clinical practice to advance knowledge and enhance the quality of life
- III. Achieve national recognition as a fully-integrated research university with a commitment to human health
- IV. Become a national model for community engagement and regional impact

Wayne State University
“Strategic Plan 2012-2017”

❖ *Currently seeking a new President to lead the University*

- Tuition increase by 3.88 percent
 - 15% cut in state appropriations last year
 - Wayne will receive a 0.65 increase in state funding this year
- Wayne state has doubled its financial aid over the past 5 years to mitigate tuition increases
 - Tuition will increase \$11.20 per credit hour or \$134.40 per semester
- WSU’s net price increase was still lower than 580 of 650 institutions in the public four-year category and the lowest in Michigan

Summary of the University’s weaknesses/challenges:

- ✓ Low student retention and graduation rates;
- ✓ Lack of significant cross-disciplinary program project grants;
- ✓ Deficiencies in research infrastructure;
- ✓ Reputation for providing poor student service;
- ✓ Outdated systems/processes;
- ✓ Budget pressures from stagnant state investment;
- ✓ Pell eligibility changes;
- ✓ Non-traditional students who take longer to graduate; and
- ✓ Growing skepticism, especially among legislators, about the value of higher education.

Strategic Focus

1. Anticipating, understanding and preparing for the future of higher education.
2. Promoting student success throughout the University.
3. Strengthening the research enterprise.
4. Developing a sustainable revenue model to allow continued growth and improvement.
5. Improving community engagement.