

February 2012 Monthly Report

Overview

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee met on February 2 to refine and affirm the goals and initiatives of the plan's first draft and define the critical action items for the first 12-24 months of implementation. These decisions were based on the extensive recommendations of 12 Task Forces who met in December and January and prioritized the plan's tactics. While not all of the Task Force suggestions were incorporated into the first two years of proposed activities, they will be retained for further consideration during the ongoing process of finalizing the Strategic Plan.

The Steering Committee held an additional teleconference prior to the Board of Trustees meeting in February to affirm the draft Executive Summary, a synthesized version of the plan. This draft will be available to the University community for review and comment on the special strategic planning website early in March. In addition, through a formal Constituent Engagement Plan, individual University leaders and leadership organizations will participate in targeted surveys to provide additional stakeholder input prior to the Steering Committee's next meeting on March 29. Following this meeting, a more comprehensive version of the plan will be developed.

At the same time, small committees headed by members of the President's staff began to consider budget and people resources necessary for the first two years of implementation and a comprehensive set of metrics that will track and measure the plan's progress. Both the budget and the metrics dashboard will be finalized before the plan is submitted to the Board of Trustees in June.

Following are the proposed goals and initiatives for the University-wide Administration's Strategic Plan.

Goal I [Enhancing Educational Excellence]: Raise the University of Tennessee's academic quality, stature and impact through educational excellence and student achievement across diverse populations

1. Drive educational excellence and student performance, raise graduation and transfer rates and ensure a "best in class" student population
2. Enhance the quality, productivity and visibility of the UT faculty and UT faculty expertise
3. Develop and coordinate collaborative and innovative academic programs that build on the unique capabilities of the System's campuses and institutes and drive key outcomes and standards defined by UT

Goal II [Expanding Research Capacities]: Strengthen University research capacities to provide solutions for critical problems, expand economic development in the state and enhance the quality of life in Tennessee, the nation and the world

1. Develop a compelling vision and a strategic and business plan for expanding UT research
2. Promote the application and commercialization of UT-sponsored research to improve the economy and develop and expand business and industry in the state
3. Define standards, measure progress and communicate research outcomes and impacts in the economy

Goal III [Fostering Our Land-Grant Mission]: Engage every member of the UT community in understanding the land-grant mission, participating in outreach and engagement and communicating the outcomes for economic development and improved quality of life for Tennesseans

1. Articulate clearly the role of the University in community outreach and engagement, link the land-grant mission across the enterprise and engage all campuses/institutes in this mission
2. Develop communications about outreach and engagement that are easily understood by constituents, with appropriate messaging for various groups including alumni and communities
3. Foster and measure alumni and student engagement and outreach exemplifying the land-grant story

Goal IV [Growing Infrastructure and Investment]: Ensure the success of these goals through an infrastructure and practices that ensure a “best in class” university

1. Catalyze and support collaboration throughout the University and with external partners, including removing policy and procedural roadblocks, to strengthen the impact of the University of Tennessee as greater than the sum of its parts
2. Define a System-wide approach to a service culture, modeled by the University-wide Administration, and support campus and institute strategic goals with financial resources, information and data
3. Implement Employer of Choice standards across the University
4. Implement a collaborative System-wide marketing/communications plan that supports all the goals of this Strategic Plan
5. Create a “culture of communication” throughout the University through a new internal communications program – both between the System and the campuses and the campuses with each other – that regularly informs the University community about System goals, processes and services through multiple channels

6. Collaborate with campuses and institutes to define the facilities and space necessary for an environment of excellence in research and education
7. Identify and promote compelling opportunities for continued and expanded investment in the University by the state, industry and philanthropic community
8. Extend diversity initiatives consistently throughout the System for faculty, staff, students and cultural/community life

Next Steps:

- Comment and feedback on plan drafts will occur in March and April as part of Constituent Engagement activities aimed at widening the circle of participation in the plan's development.
- A more comprehensive version of the plan will be developed following the Steering Committee meeting on March 29, 2012.