

UT System Strategic Planning Project September 2011 Monthly Report

Overview

The University of Tennessee System strategic planning project focused on three key activities in September – (1) the formation and launch of the project’s Steering Committee and its first meeting, (2) initial “listening sessions” to gather data from stakeholders at the System and campus levels, and (3) development of a strategic communications plan to inform constituencies about the plan’s progress.

In charging the Steering Committee on September 28, 2011, President Joe DiPietro framed the importance of the planning activities – “This project will set the tone for UT for the next five to ten years and will provide a roadmap focused on the future and how to get there.” His other key points included:

- The Steering Committee’s work should be forward-thinking and innovative because higher education has to evolve, and the committee also must take into account necessary resources to accomplish the goals.
- The final document should be flexible to change as internal or external circumstances do – a dynamic document.
- The Steering Committee represents a diverse group of constituents and also serves as advocates for the process; we will engage these constituencies along the way.
- It is essential to ensure that the campuses and institutes participate in the plan’s development and see themselves in the outcomes through various activities built into the process.

Steering Committee Launch Meeting

Members of the Steering Committee and the constituencies they represent are: Larry Arrington, Chancellor, UT Institute of Agriculture; Charles Brinkley, Jr., UT Alumnus, UT Foundation; Lawrence “LB” Brown, Assoc. Prof. of Pharmaceutical Sciences, UTHSC, University-Wide Faculty; Roger Brown, Chancellor, UT Chattanooga; Keith Carver, Executive Assistant to the President, University-Wide Administration; Hank Dye, VP for Public & Government Relations, University-Wide Administration; Linda Hendricks, Chief Human Resources Officer, University-Wide Administration; Mary Jinks, VP of Public Service, Institute for Public Service; Ron Maples, Controller, UTK, University-Wide Administration; Susan Martin, Provost, UTK, UT Knoxville; Leann McElhaney, Accounting Coordinator, CASNR, University-Wide Staff; Jim Murphy, Board of Trustees member; Jerald Ogg, Provost & VP of Academic Affairs, UT Martin; Stacey Patterson, Director of Research Partnerships, University-Wide Administration; Theotis Robinson, VP for Equity and Diversity, University-Wide Administration; Steve Schwab, Chancellor, UT Health Science Center; and Shalin Shah, Student, UTC, University-Wide Students.

Based on President DiPietro's key themes of his administration, the Steering Committee proposed the first set of strategic plan goals, which will be revised in November following listening sessions with various constituencies and further data-gathering. They also provided input on the System mission statement developed in 2006; a subcommittee will propose an updated System mission statement at the November meeting, following review and discussion with the president and campus and institute chancellors.

These overall goals are:

#1 Raise UT's academic quality and stature while working collaboratively to increase student achievement:

- High quality productive faculty (how to attract them, retain them)
- Well-supported, high quality innovative and relevant programs
- Motivated and successful students and alumni

...to raise the stature of UT

#2 Develop self-sustaining research solutions that contribute to economic development, educate the state's workforce and enhance lives in Tennessee, the nation and the globe

#3 Create first class experiences throughout the UT system by weaving diversity in the administration, academic and student life, alumni, local communities and the cultural and physical environment

#4 Enhance our outreach and engagement activities:

- Better define
- Better measure
- Better communicate

#5 Advance and support the strategic goals of the UT campuses and institutes:

- By allocating available financial resources
- By becoming an "employer of choice"

...to accomplish UT's strategic plan

#6 Develop a collaborative System-wide communications plan that strengthens and supports the positioning and visibility of the university, its campuses, and institutes

In addition, the president will engage the campus and institute chancellors to consider over the next few months “a purposeful strategy” to determine the university’s approach to decentralization. This would also involve a discussion of the standards for valued centralized services and activities that support the System’s administrative mission.

“Listening Sessions”

The Napa Group consultants have scheduled visits at each campus in September and October to engage broad groups of stakeholders around critical strategic issues – the unique characteristics and value of each campus and institute to the UT System and the greatest opportunities for the university and each campus and institute for the future. Meetings in September included UT System administrators and UT Chattanooga vice chancellors, deans, faculty, students, staff, civic officials, community leaders, advisory groups, alumni and trustees.

Communications Plan

Important to the project is transparent and consistent communications. The communications plan and constituent engagement activities will be anchored by a special website that will go live in October. The planning process is to be featured on UT, campus, institute and other home pages so information about activities and progress will be easy to find. The UT Board of Trustees will be regularly informed at meetings by trustees involved in the project and through various materials. For the community as a whole, other information about the plan’s progress will be included in *Tennessee Today* emails, *Alumnus* articles and other publications. Campus communications directors will also be actively working with the System communications office.

Next Steps – October-November, 2011:

- Strategic Plan website – October 2011
- “Listening sessions” (campuses, institutes, and other key stakeholders); other data-gathering, research, and analysis – October-November 2011
- Second Steering Committee meeting – November 11, 2011
- Launch of Task Forces to develop major initiatives – November 2011-January 2012