

A Protocol for Strategic Plan Alignment

Board of Governors Strategic Planning Committee

January 16, 2013



Alignment: A Two-part Process

In November 2011 the Board of Governors approved a new Strategic Plan for the years 2012-2025. The Board's new Strategic Plan is noted for its long-range coverage, and for its inclusion of general goal areas and specific goals on 28 performance indicators.

Each State University System (SUS) institution also has a strategic plan, approved by its University Board of Trustees. These plans cover differing time periods, and each is largely and appropriately a reflection of the unique mission of each institution—

ranging from several universities with very high research activity to a single institution that focuses on the arts and sciences at the baccalaureate level.

SUS strategic plan alignment needs to be viewed as two aspects of a whole: alignment of the Board of Governors' Strategic Plan with reasonable expectations for success relative to its goals, and alignment of university strategic plans with those priorities and goals identified in the Board of Governors' Strategic Plan.

Board of Governors Strategic Plan Alignment

Critical to the Board of Governors' Strategic Plan is that it is seen as a living document. The Plan is driven by nine general goal areas and specific goals for 28 performance metrics. As a living document, one for which the SUS will be held accountable relative to projections, it is critical that, from time to time, the Board's Strategic Plan is revisited to determine the extent to which discrete goals on the Plan's 28 performance metrics are realistic given past performance and current circumstances. Imagine, for example, a situation where a metric-driven strategic plan created at the beginning of the Great Recession in 2007 was not revisited. It is likely that, further down the road, the plan would be at variance with the realities of performance capabilities and associated funding, dwindling opportunities for external collaboration, and the potential implications of major social and fiscal reform at state and federal levels.

Further, there is ongoing work that can meaningfully inform the Board's Strategic Plan. For example, the gap analysis being conducted by the Board's Commission on Higher Education Access and Degree Attainment is likely to provide more precise information to identify those academic disciplines in which Florida needs more graduates, and perhaps where those graduates are most likely to be employed. The Commission's work may also provide updated information regarding the numbers of baccalaureate degrees needed by 2025. Similarly, efforts by the SUS to improve graduate tracking into

the workforce are likely to provide valuable information currently unavailable.

Other current goals on performance metrics may have been initially over- or under-projected the first time. If, as one example, faculty membership in national academies has been 38 for the past two years running, is it realistic to expect that the SUS will have 75 by the year 2025? The time to determine whether that is the case is during a mid-course examination, not in 2025. And due to the length of the Board's Strategic Plan, it is recommended that two mid-course examinations take place: one in 2014 and another in 2019.

The Alignment of University Strategic Plans

Alignment with General Goal Areas

Currently, institutions develop their own strategic plans on a cycle of their own determination, present them to their Boards of Trustees for approval, and, per Board regulation 1.001(3)(c), transmit them to the Board of Governors for approval. At issue with the process is ensuring that university strategic plans appropriately address the general goal areas and the performance metrics in the Board of Governors 2012-2025 Strategic Plan.

It is understood that the nine goal areas contained in the Board of Governors Strategic Plan are, for the greater part, being addressed by individual university strategic plans. These goal areas are hardly foreign territory to SUS institutions. They were created as the result of a matrix that intersects the three characteristics of excellence, productivity, and strategic priorities for a knowledge economy with the tripartite mission of higher education institutions: teaching, research, and public service:

Teaching and Learning
1. Strengthening quality and reputation of academic programs.
2. Increasing degree productivity and program efficiency
3. Increasing the number of degrees awarded in STEM and other areas of strategic emphasis
Scholarship, Research and Innovation
4. Strengthening quality and reputation of scholarship, research, and innovation
5. Increasing research and commercialization activity
6. Increasing collaboration and external support for research activity
Community and Business Engagement
7. Strengthening quality and recognition of commitment to community and business engagement
8. Increasing levels of community and business engagement
9. Increasing community and business workforce

The Board’s interest here in the context of alignment is seeing a demonstration of attention given to these goals in the individual plans, being advised as to some of the high-level strategies institutions have for addressing these goal areas, and, importantly, understanding which of these goal areas carry the highest priorities for each institution given its unique mission.

Alignment with Performance Indicator Goals

Simply put, it is impossible for the Board of Governors to know whether its performance indicator goals will be met unless it knows that goals have been set by the individual institutions and what those goals are. Accordingly, each university will need to set goals for each of the 28 performance indicators in order for the Board of Governors to be in a position to analyze projections against past performance.

It is understood that the further out goals are projected, the less reliable are the projections. Nevertheless, these projections, in conjunction with the hard data of past performance, will give the Board of Governors the best chance of determining, at points of mid-course examination, whether goals are realistic or whether they need to be adjusted either upward or downward. The 28 Performance Indicator Goals are:

Number	Performance Indicators	2025 Goals
01	National Ranking for Universities and Programs	Five universities ranks in the top 50 for public undergraduate; each university striving for a top 25 program
02	Freshmen in top 10% of graduating high school class	50%
03	Universities above benchmark pass rates for professional licensure and certification examinations	Above benchmarks for all examinations
04	Eligible programs with specialized accreditation	All, with exceptions
05	Average time to degree	4.0 years
06	4 year graduation rates	50%
07	6 year graduation rates	70%
08	% of bachelor's degrees with excess hours	80%
09	Bachelor's degrees awarded annually	90,000
10	Graduate degrees awarded annually	40,000
11	Bachelor's degrees awarded to minorities	31,500
12	Number of adult undergraduates enrolled	75,000
13	% of course sections offered via distance and blended learning	30%
14	Bachelor's degrees in STEM	22,500
15	Bachelor's degrees in all areas of strategic emphasis	45,000
16	Graduate degrees in STEM	14,000
17	Graduate degrees in all areas of strategic emphasis	20,000
18	Faculty membership in national academies	75
19	Number of faculty designated a highly cited scholar	100
20	Total R&D Expenditures	\$3.25B
21	Number of licenses and options executed	250
22	Number of start-up companies created	40
23	% of undergraduate seniors assisting in faculty research	50%
24	% of R&D expenditures funded from external sources	67%
25	Number of universities with Carnegie's Community Engagement classification	All
26	% of students participating in identified community and business engagement activities	Goal to be established end-of-year 2014
27	Enrollment in professional training and continuing education courses	Goal to be established end-of-year 2014
28	% of baccalaureate graduates continuing their education or employed in Florida	90+%

The Alignment Mechanism

It is not the intention of the Board of Governors that SUS institutions need to go back to the drawing board with their strategic plans. Indeed, some institutional strategic plans have only just been approved at the university level. Neither is it the intention that university strategic plans be in all ways calendrically aligned with the Board of Governors Strategic Plan except insofar as each plan addresses the 28 performance indicators out to the year 2025.

The alignment of a university's strategic plan will, therefore, be effected by means of a brief addendum in a standard format co-designed by Board staff and institutional representatives. The addendum is expected to be comprised of two parts:

1. A brief (five page) narrative that:
 - a. Describes how each institution's unique mission needs to be seen in the context of the totality of the State University System.
 - b. Provides the most salient examples of how the goal areas are being addressed at the institution.
 - c. Identifies which of the goal areas carry the highest priority for the institution.
2. Submission of 2025 projections for the 28 performance indicators.

Timeline

University Strategic Plans will need to be amended as appropriate, reviewed and approved by University Boards of Trustees, and submitted to the Board of Governors Fall 2013 or Winter 2014 for approval by the Board in Spring 2014. Once performance indicator projections have been analyzed, the Board will be in a position to carry out a mid-course examination in Summer 2014 and, as appropriate, to modify its Strategic Plan goals. Another mid-course examination should be conducted in 2019.