



VISION 2020

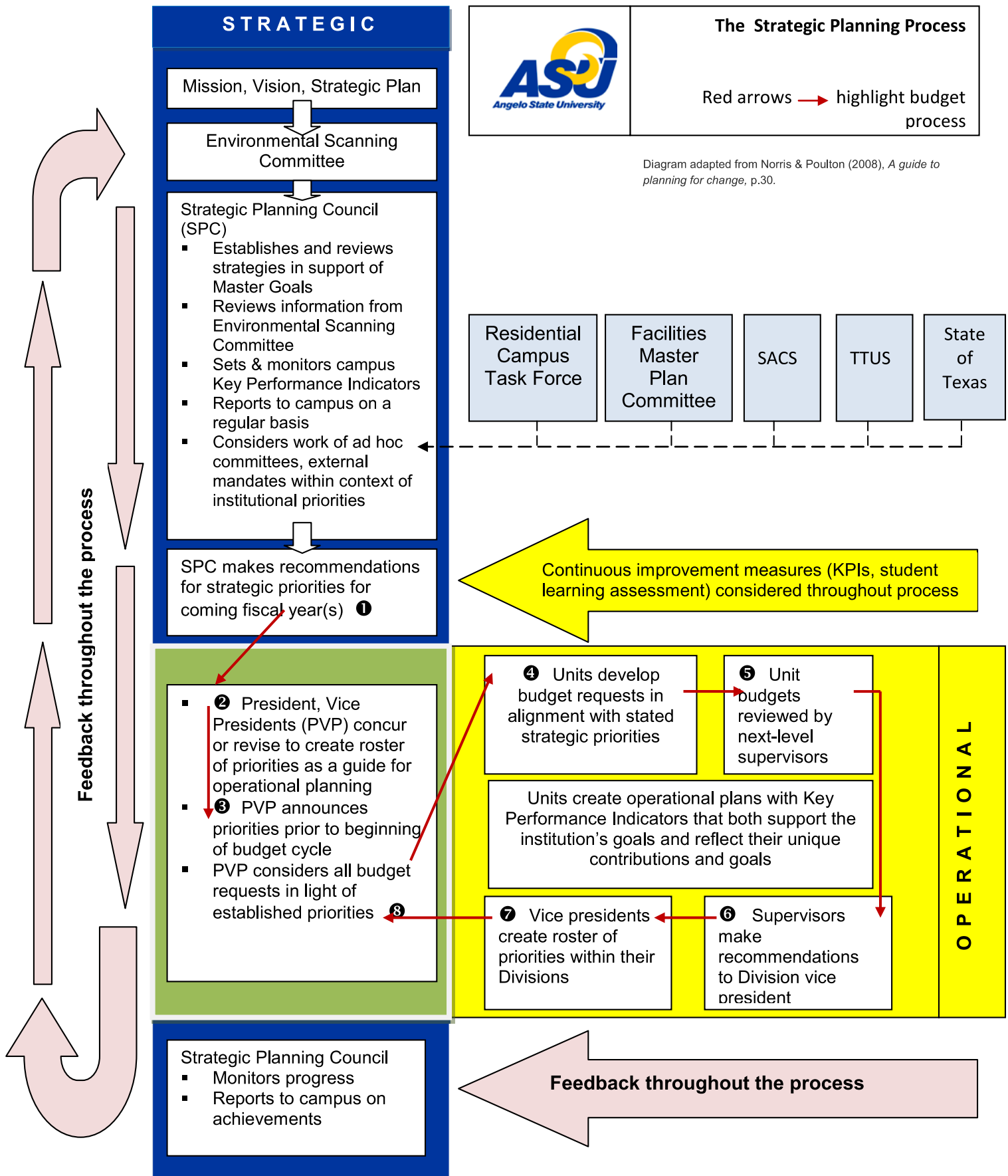
ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY

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Please note: Earlier iterations of the University’s strategic plan were called “Vision 2012.” As the planning process progressed, the decision was made to expand the horizons of the process to allow for additional long-range goals. As a result, the work of the Vision 2012 planning process informs and is made a part of Vision 2020.

Within this plan, items highlighted in light blue are those that have been revised as of July 2010 to reflect the goals of the Texas Tech University System.

*Dr. James Limbaugh
Vice President for Strategy, Planning, and Policy
July 2010*





VISION 2020 ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY

As approved November 2009 and updated July 2010

Vision 2020—Angelo State University supports and gives operational guidance to the achievement of the University's mission statement:

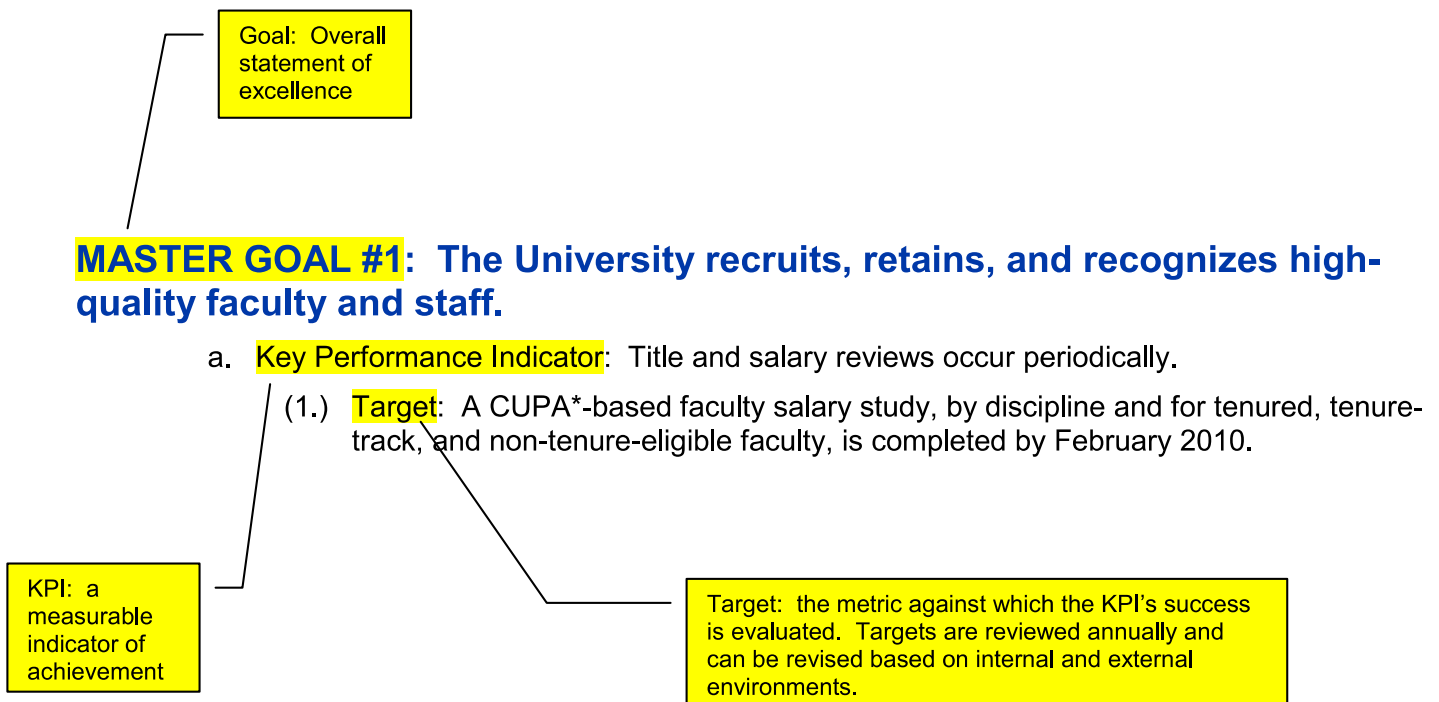
Angelo State University, a member of the Texas Tech University System, delivers undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines. In a learning-centered environment distinguished by its integration of teaching, research, creative endeavor, service, and co-curricular experiences, ASU prepares students to be responsible citizens and to have productive careers.

All planning functions maintain at their respective cores the centrality of the University's academic program. To this end, **ASU's growth in achievement of its mission is guided through Vision 2020, a strategic framework comprised of two complementary documents: the Vision 2020 Plan for Academic Programs and Initiatives and the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan.**

When read as a narrative, the tenets of the Strategic Plan and the Academic Plan clearly outline our institution's expectations for excellence.

- **The Vision 2020 Plan for Academic Programs and Initiatives** focuses on broadly based statements of excellence that are unchanging from year to year. In this plan, five goals outline the core of the University's mission.
 1. The University provides exemplary undergraduate and graduate curricula to meet market and economic demands and to continue the growth of the institution.
 2. The University engages with the community to complement students' academic experiences.
 3. The University provides a comprehensive program to support and advance undergraduate student learning and transition into ASU.
 4. Members of the faculty conduct research and coordinate a wide variety of sponsored projects.
 5. The University regularly evaluates all academic programs to assure continuous improvement.
- As the encompassing "action plan" for the University, the **Vision 2020 Strategic Plan** measures achievement against seven mandates, all of which directly support the University's academic imperatives outlined in the Vision 2020 Plan for Academic Programs and Initiatives.
 1. The University recruits, retains, and recognizes diverse, high-quality faculty and staff.
 2. The University provides and maintains facilities appropriate for the University's academic and co-curricular programs.
 3. The University recruits, retains and graduates, in numbers consistent with increased goals for enrollment and retention, an academically qualified student body reflecting the diversity of the region, the state, and the nation.
 4. The University develops and expands both undergraduate and graduate curricula and co-curricula to support students' intellectual and personal growth, to address issues relevant to society, and to meet the demands of State of Texas initiatives and the marketplace.
 5. The University maintains a supportive, helpful environment for students, faculty, staff, community, and alumni.
 6. The University develops and enhances external partnerships, collaborations, and funding opportunities.
 7. The University regularly assesses and evaluates all institutional functions and programs to assure continuous improvement and to maximize efficiencies.

How to read the sections of the Vision 2020 Plan for Academic Programs and Initiatives and the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan for Angelo State University:



I. THE VISION 2020 PLAN FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

ACADEMIC GOAL #1: The University provides exemplary undergraduate and graduate curricula to meet market and economic demands and to continue the growth of the institution.

- a. Key Performance Indicator: The University continues support and expansion of programs of distinction: Agriculture, Educator Preparation Programs, and Nursing.
- b. Key Performance Indicator: The University develops, as funding is available, new and existing programs with potential to become programs of distinction (see Attachment A, page 16).
- c. Key Performance Indicator: Colleges expand delivery of curricula through distance learning initiatives and collaborations with other higher education entities. *[Distance learning is defined as coursework delivered in its entirety either on-line or at a remote site.]*
 - (1.) Target: AY 2009-2010—A distance learning study is completed.
 - (2.) Target: AY 2009-2010—ASU's presence in the Hill Country is expanded, including establishment of opportunities in Boerne in addition to sites in Fredericksburg and Marble Falls.
 - (3.) Target: AY 2010-2011—Transfer partnerships are established with Howard College.
 - (4.) Target: AY 2011-2012—Five additional 4 + 1, 2 + 2 or 2 + 3 programs are implemented in partnership with Texas Tech University.
 - (5.) Target: AY 2019-2020—The University operates a branch campus in the Hill Country with the capacity to provide students 100% of their degree requirements.
- d. Key Performance Indicator: The University offers evening and weekend classes in a configuration that allows non-traditional students to actively pursue and complete a baccalaureate degree.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2014-2015—Undergraduate students are able to complete a baccalaureate degree via evening and weekend courses.
- e. Key Performance Indicator: The University offers dual credit courses as appropriate.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2009-2010—The dual credit feasibility study and action plan is completed.
 - (2.) Target: Summer 2010—An annual dual-credit residential enrichment camp for high school students is established.
 - (3.) Target: AY 2010-2011—Expanded on-site dual credit offerings are available through a partnership with the San Angelo Independent School District.
- f. Key Performance Indicator: The University offers graduate programs in response to local, regional, and national needs.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2010-2011—A market analysis study identifies specific areas for growth.
 - (2.) Target: AY 2019-2020—Graduate enrollment comprises 10% of total enrollment.

- g. Key Performance Indicator: The University engages in a comprehensive and ongoing evaluation of its curriculum to assure its relevance and coherence.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2010-2011—A comprehensive review of the core curriculum is completed.
 - (2.) Target: AY 2011-2012—The curriculum is revised in accordance with Texas College Readiness Standards.
- h. Key Performance Indicator: The University attains program accreditation in disciplines as necessary and appropriate for continued excellence.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2010-2011—NCATE accreditation is achieved (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education).
 - (2.) Target: AY 2016-2017*—AACSB accreditation is achieved (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business).

** correction from previously-published plan due to error on date*

 - (3.) Target: Other disciplinary and state accreditations are achieved as appropriate.
- i. Key Performance Indicator: Undergraduate students successfully achieve placement in post-baccalaureate educational programs.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2013-2014—The University's placement rate in graduate and professional schools meets or exceeds annual statewide averages for peer institutions.

ACADEMIC GOAL #2: The University engages with the community to complement students' academic experiences.

- a. Key Performance Indicator: Academic programs consider community engagement an integral component of their respective curricula.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2013-2014—The number of academic courses having community engagement activities has increased by 10%, using AY 2009-2010 as a baseline.
- b. Key Performance Indicator: The University partners with Goodfellow Air Force Base and the Air Force to provide academic opportunities for members of the armed forces.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2010-2011—A new baccalaureate program in cultural competency for the Air Force is available.
 - (2.) Target: AY 2010-2011—The Troops to Teachers program is implemented.

ACADEMIC GOAL #3: The University provides a comprehensive program to support and advance transition into college life, undergraduate student learning, and individual academic success.

- a. Key Performance Indicator: A comprehensive plan addresses special needs of entering freshmen.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2009-2010—A University-wide committee develops plans for the coordination and implementation of new and existing services, including First-Year Experience (FYE) and summer orientation (SOAR).
- b. Key Performance Indicator: Freshmen participate in First-Year Experience classes and related activities.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2010-2011—Specialized FYE classes are available.

- (2.) Target: AY 2011-2012—All freshmen enroll in an FYE class (USTD 1201) as a required course.
- c. Key Performance Indicator: Students benefit from specialized tutoring services.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2009-2010—A University-wide tutoring center is established.
 - (2.) Target: AY 2010-2011—SI (supplemental instruction) increases by five SI leaders over AY 2009-2010 levels, with five SI leaders added each year through AY 2013-2014.
 - (3.) Target: AY 2010-2011—A mandatory post-suspension/probation class is implemented.
- d. Key Performance Indicator: All entering freshmen participate in mandatory academic and campus orientation prior to advising and registration.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2009-2010—A revised summer orientation program is established.
 - (2.) Target: AY 2009-2010—A new academic orientation format, including on-line version, is available.
 - (3.) Target: AY 2010-2011—A new campus orientation, including an on-line version, is enacted.
 - (4.) Target: AY 2011-2012—The “Celebrate ASU” concept (including “Freshman Camp,” revised “Rambunctious Weekend,” and Convocation) is implemented.
- e. Key Performance Indicator: The University provides an integrated, campus-wide advising program.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2009-2010—A coordinated, systematic advising system within colleges for students with declared majors is in place.
 - (2.) Target: AY 2010-2011—A coordinated, systematic advising system for students who are undeclared majors is in place.
 - (3.) Target: AY 2010-2011—Programs of support for students in academic difficulty are established.
- f. Key Performance Indicator: The University provides a coordinated developmental program.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2010-2011—The University Developmental Plan is revised.

ACADEMIC GOAL #4: Members of the faculty conduct research and coordinate a wide variety of sponsored projects.

- a. Key Performance Indicator: The University supports proposals in scholarly activity and creative endeavor.
 - (1.) Targets:
 - AY 2010-2011: 35 external submittals are posted.
 - AY 2014-2015: 45 external submittals are posted.
 - AY 2019-2020: 60 external submittals are posted.
- b. Key Performance Indicator: The University supports a dynamic program of scholarly activity and creative endeavor.
 - (1.) Targets:
 - AY 2009-2010: \$1,000,000 in external dollars expended annually

- AY 2014-2015: \$2,500,000 in external dollars expended annually
- AY 2019-2020: \$3,000,000 in external dollars expended annually

ACADEMIC GOAL #5: The University regularly evaluates all academic programs to assure continuous improvement.

- a. Key Performance Indicator: All academic departments are regularly evaluated against institutional standards for performance as outlined in the academic program review.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2009-2010—The revision of the academic program review process is completed.
 - (2.) Target: AY 2010-2011—The revised academic program review cycle begins.
 - (3.) Target: AY 2014-2015—All academic departments have completed the first round of the academic program review process.
- b. Key Performance Indicator: The University supports all academic programs through an integrated process of accountability and data-driven decision-making in support of resource allocation.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2009-2010—All academic departments maintain an integrated system of goals, student learning assessments, and budgets (through “Strategic Planning Online” software).
- c. Key Performance Indicator: All academic department and academic units develop and implement assessment measures that provide ongoing evaluation of student learning outcomes.
 - (1.) Target: AY 2009-2010—All academic departments have learning goals that are supported by a student learning assessment plan.
 - (2.) Target: AY 2009-2010—All academic departments have implemented an assessment cycle to assess periodically student learning against established goals and to document refinements made to the curriculum in response to the results of student learning assessment efforts.



II. THE VISION 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY

MASTER GOAL #1: The University recruits, retains, and recognizes diverse, high-quality faculty and staff.

a. Objective #1: The University maintains a competitive salary structure.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: Title and salary reviews occur periodically.
 - Target: A CUPA*-based faculty salary study, by discipline and for tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-eligible faculty, is completed by August 2010.
 - Target: A staff equity study is completed by the end of FY2011.

** CUPA: College and University Personnel Association*
- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: Faculty salaries are competitive with those at peer institutions as established through CUPA standards.
 - Targets:
 - FY 2013: Median salaries are at 80% of peer institutions as established through CUPA standards.
 - 2015: Median salaries are at 83% of peer institutions as established through CUPA standards.
 - 2020: Median salaries are at 88% of peer institutions as established through CUPA standards.
- (3.) Key Performance Indicator: Staff salaries are competitive when measured against established benchmarks.
 - Targets:
 - FY 2012: Salary range midpoints of exempt and non-exempt benchmark staff jobs are at the 50th percentile of the relevant labor markets as determined by surveys approved by the Office of Human Resources.
 - FY 2012: Salary range midpoints of administrative and executive benchmark staff jobs are at the 75th percentile of the relevant labor markets as determined by surveys approved by the Office of Human Resources.

b. Objective #2: The University fosters enrichment opportunities for faculty and staff.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: Professional development and enrichment opportunities are provided for faculty and staff.
 - Target: Using the total number of activities in FY 2010 as a baseline, development opportunities offered through the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Research, Human Resources, and other ASU agencies increase annually by 5% through FY 2013 (September 1, 2012-August 31, 2013).

- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: The University offers a variety of programs and opportunities through the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Research (CITR) to support faculty development.
- Target: FY 2010—A Faculty Mentors program is implemented.
 - Target: FY 2011—The use of the CITR lounge has increased by 20% over FY 2009 usage levels.
 - Target: FY-2011—The number of personal consultations with faculty has increased by 10%, using AY 2009-2010 as a baseline.
 - Target: FY 2011—Two off-campus summer teaching/research institutes are offered as faculty development opportunities.

c. Objective #3: ASU recruits and retains a diverse cohort of faculty and staff.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: The ratio of underrepresented faculty as a percentage of faculty reflects the ratio of underrepresented students to the student body as a whole.
- Target: By the end of FY 2012, the number of applications from faculty in underrepresented groups has increased by 10% over the baseline number of applications received in FY 2010.
 - Target: By the end of FY 2015, a minimum of 25% of ASU faculty and staff are from underrepresented groups, with a specific focus on recruitment and retention of Hispanic personnel.

d. Objective #4: The University recognizes faculty and staff achievements.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: Faculty and staff are recognized annually for exceptional teaching, research, and service.
- Target: By the end of FY 2011, Professional Achievement Award criteria are revised and approved by faculty for implementation in FY 2012.
 - Target: Beginning in FY 2010, the University implements at least two annual recognition programs to celebrate faculty and staff achievements.
 - Target: During FY 2010, and under the direction of Faculty Senate, college-level awards are established to recognize faculty for teaching, scholarly activity/creative endeavor, and leadership/service.

MASTER GOAL #2: The University provides and maintains facilities appropriate for the University's academic and co-curricular programs.

a. Objective #1: Existing facilities are updated on a regular basis to align with current disciplinary standards and evolving modes of teaching and learning.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: The University uses a coordinated approach to the updating and replacement of technology utilized in teaching and learning environments.
- Target: By the end of FY 2012, 100% of the technology in existing classrooms and labs is updated, using the status of technology in FY 2010 as a baseline.
 - Target: By the end of FY 2011, a program to update and refresh classroom and supporting technology (including network) periodically is fully in place.

- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: The University upgrades and remodels academic learning spaces on a regular schedule.

➤ Target: Four academic spaces per year (a combination of classrooms, study lounges, and/or office spaces) are identified and renovated.

b. Objective #2: Library resources and services reflect the needs of the University community.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: Students report a high rate of satisfaction with the adequacy of the library's services and resources.

➤ Target: On the student satisfaction survey, a minimum of 70% of students surveyed select "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with library services and resources.

- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: The University meets or exceeds the national average library expenditure per FTE student of \$484 as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics for fall 2006 (currently, the per-student expenditure at ASU is \$465).

➤ Targets:

- 2010: \$470
- 2015: \$480
- 2020: \$490

c. Objective #3: The University maintains and updates its capital facilities plan on a regular basis.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: An updated capital facilities plan is completed by December, 2010.

d. Objective #4: University facilities are utilized as efficiently as possible.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: The University's classroom space usage efficiency score* shows continuous improvement.

➤ Targets:

- 2010: score of 66
- 2015: score of 74
- 2020: score of 91

* A measure from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board that is comprised of the scores from three individual metrics including Classroom Utilization, Classroom Demand, and Classroom Percent Fill. Classroom utilization is the hours per week that a classroom is used. Classroom percent fill compares a classroom's available capacity to actual enrollment. The maximum classroom usage efficiency score is 100.

MASTER GOAL #3: The University recruits, retains and graduates, in numbers consistent with increased goals for enrollment and retention, an academically qualified student body reflecting the diversity of the region, the state, and the nation.

a. Objective #1: The University strategically manages its recruitment and retention goals.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: A comprehensive enrollment management plan establishes criteria for goals related to the overall recruitment and retention of students within the context of TTUS goals.

➤ Target: AY 2009-2010—An enrollment management plan is implemented.

b. Objective #2: The University recruits students in accordance with goals established in support of Texas Tech University System (TTUS) goals.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: The University achieves fall head-count enrollments as established by TTUS.

➤ Targets:

- Fall 2010: 6,800
- Fall 2015: 8,363
- Fall 2020: 10,000

- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: Graduate programs of study contribute to institutional growth.

➤ Targets:

- Fall 2010: Graduate student enrollment is 8.75% of total enrollment.
- Fall 2015: Graduate student enrollment is 9.85% of total enrollment.
- Fall 2020: Graduate student enrollment is 10% of total enrollment.

c. Objective #3: Students are retained through their academic careers and to graduation.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: First-year to second-year retention rates meet or exceed the statewide average of 74.1% (statewide, public university, fall 2007 entering cohort).

➤ Targets:

- Fall 2010: 59%
- Fall 2015: 63%
- Fall 2020: 68%

d. Objective #4: The University maintains a diverse student body that reflects the demographics of the State of Texas.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: The University is a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

➤ Targets:

- Fall 2010: 26%* of undergraduate FTE enrollment
- Fall 2015: 28% of undergraduate FTE enrollment
- Fall 2020: 30% of undergraduate FTE enrollment

* A first step toward achieving HSI status is that 25% of undergraduate full-time equivalency enrollment (FTE) will be self-reporting as Hispanic.

- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: The University contributes in a positive manner to the State of Texas' Closing the Gap college enrollment initiative targeting Hispanic students.

- Target: AY 2014-2015—The University achieves the Closing the Gap enrollment goal of 2,700 Hispanic students.
- (3.) Key Performance Indicator: The University receives Title V funding in support of its Hispanic-Serving Institution status.
 - Target: AY 2010-2011—A grant request is submitted and awarded.

MASTER GOAL #4: The University develops and expands both undergraduate and graduate curricula and co-curricula to support students' intellectual and personal growth, to address issues relevant to society, and to meet the demands of State of Texas initiatives and the marketplace.

Primary goals of the Vision 2020 Plan for Academic Programs and Initiatives are herein incorporated into the strategic plan. Please see the Master Plan (pages 5-8) for supporting key performance indicators and targets.

MASTER GOAL #5: The University maintains a supportive, helpful environment for students, faculty, staff, community, and alumni.

a. Objective #1: Students receive adequate academic and career advising at all levels of their academic careers.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: Students report satisfaction with the quality of their advising.
 - Target: In its biennial administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement, the University reports student satisfaction with academic advising equal to or above national levels.
- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: Students report satisfaction with the quality and scope of career development services and counseling.
 - Target: In its biennial administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement, the University reports student satisfaction with career advising equal to or above national levels.

b. Objective #2: Faculty and staff have positive perceptions of their working environment.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: University employees express satisfaction with overall working climate and conditions.
 - Target: At least 80% of staff and faculty rate satisfaction at least at 3.5 out of 5 on the biennial Survey of Organizational Excellence.
 - Target: All constituent units of the Division of Finance and Administration achieve a composite rating of 90% or more in the "satisfied/somewhat satisfied/very satisfied" categories on its annual customer satisfaction survey.

c. Objective #3: The community has a positive perception of the University.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: as developed through the goals of the new Director of Community Relations
 - Target: To be determined

d. Objective #4: The University promotes and supports wellness initiatives for the entire campus community.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: The University provides technical expertise and support for wellness initiatives.
 - Target: By the end of academic year 2009-2010, the University provides activities and resources that ensure all aspects of HB 1297 are met.

MASTER GOAL #6: The University develops and enhances external partnerships, collaborations, and funding opportunities.

Also see the Vision 2020 Master Plan for Academic Programs and Initiatives (Academic Goal #4) for related goal on faculty research and sponsored projects.

a. Objective #1: The University establishes centers and institutes to provide opportunities for partnerships at the local, regional, and national levels.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: Establish the Center for Community Wellness, Engagement, and Development (WED).
 - Target: The Center for WED is fully operational by the end of AY 2009-2010.
- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: Establish the Center for Security Studies.
 - Target: The Center for Security Studies is fully operational by the end of AY 2011-2012.

b. Objective #2: Community engagement activities provide opportunities for positive interaction between and among University and community groups.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: Faculty, staff, and students participate in outreach and engagement activities.
 - Targets: Nursing students engage in outreach hours through the San Jacinto Clinic.
 - 2010: 2,218
 - 2015: 4,547
 - 2020: 5,456
 - Targets: The Small Business Development Center offers assistance and training.
 - Client assistance:
 - 2010: 525
 - 2015: 600
 - 2020: 700
 - Training participants:
 - 2010: 1,250
 - 2015: 1,500
 - 2020: 1,600
- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: Local and regional K-12 students participate in outreach and engagement activities sponsored by the University.

- Target: Goals of the Center for Community Wellness, Engagement, and Development to be determined

c. Objective #3: The University manages an active program in fundraising and institutional development.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: The University maintains an endowment that supports the academic program of the institution.

➤ Targets:

- 2010: \$101,725,000 in endowment dollars*
- 2015: \$125,000,000 in endowment dollars
- 2020: \$150,000,000 in endowment dollars

* including the Carr Foundation

- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: The University actively and successfully solicits donations and bequests from institutional supporters.

➤ Target:

- Angelo State University Campaign: \$20 million by 2013

MASTER GOAL #7: The University regularly assesses and evaluates all institutional functions and programs to assure continuous improvement and to maximize efficiencies.

Also see the Vision 2020 Master Plan for Academic Programs and Initiatives (Academic Goal #5) for related goal on student learning assessment within academic programs.

a. Objective #1: The University engages in an ongoing program of continuous improvement.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: AY 2010-2011—The University engages in a self-study of services that promote student learning and development in accordance with the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.
- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: AY 2011-2012—The University engages in a program of continuous organizational excellence as outlined by Quality Texas or the Baldrige National Quality Program.

b. Objective #2: Administrative and academic units assess procedures and outputs.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: Via the institutional effectiveness cycle, every program annually assesses and reports assessment outcomes.
- Target: 100% documented participation in FY2010.
- (2.) Key Performance Indicator: Via the institutional effectiveness cycle, every administrative unit makes decisions based on assessment results in order to demonstrate improvements and incorporates them into ongoing activities.
- Target: 100% documented participation by FY2011.

c. Objective #3: All units/programs share best practices.

- (1.) Key Performance Indicator: Units/programs post assessment best practices on web pages and R drive.
- Target: 100% participation by FY2011.

ATTACHMENT A



Angelo State University Programs of Distinction

Overview

Angelo State University recognizes “programs of distinction” that contribute to the University’s tradition of teaching excellence at all levels and that exhibit institutional strengths and distinctiveness that set ASU apart from other regional comprehensive colleges and universities. In identifying such programs, the University also makes progress toward recommended strategic initiatives identified by the Texas Tech University System, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan for Angelo State University.

The process of identifying these programs includes both an overarching definition as well as measurable criteria used to guide the analysis and decision making regarding the identification and development of such programs.

Definition

A program of distinction displays excellence in its course of study, student achievement, relationship to the University’s mission, and the reputation and achievements of the program as a whole when compared to other peer programs.

Criteria

These measurable criteria set each program apart from its competitors. These criteria should be viewed not as a checklist, but as a whole to aid in the identification and validation of “programs of distinction.”

1. Structural Excellence

- a. Steady or increasing enrollments of majors have been maintained for the past five years.
- b. Scores on standardized tests or certification exams, if applicable, are equal to or surpass the state/national average.
- c. The program’s rate of retention and perseverance to graduation is at least 10% above internal and external averages.
- d. The program attains and maintains appropriate state/national accreditations, if applicable.

2. Faculty

- a. Faculty distinguish themselves through exemplary teaching, scholarly activity/creative endeavor, and leadership/service appropriate to the discipline.
- b. A faculty succession plan for each academic department addresses both short-term issues (e.g., resignations, retirements) and provides guidance for future changes in disciplinary focus, student demand, and/or emerging theories/structures.

3. Program Distinctiveness

- a. The “points of distinction” of the program are clearly defined and are made a part of all components of the program’s operation.

“Points of distinction” may focus on such areas as:

- (1.) Comprehensive scope of program offerings;
 - (2.) Relevance of the program (e.g., maintenance of up-to-date curriculum to keep abreast of changes in the field of study that students need to be prepared after college);
 - (3.) Pure and applied research (faculty, undergraduate, and/or graduate);
 - (4.) Community outreach and engagement;
 - (5.) Contributions to the field on a national level;
 - (6.) Demand.
- b. The program responds to external demand, as characterized by any of the following:
 - (1.) Projected vitality of the program’s focus over the next several years, or even decades;
 - (2.) Projected national needs;
 - (3.) Growth potential as component of workforce projections;
 - (4.) Level of student interest (current, past, and projected future);
 - (5.) Uniqueness of the program or its institutional assets compared to other Texas/southern/U.S. universities;
 - (6.) Real and perceived competitors in other Texas/southern/U.S. universities.
 - c. “Points of distinction” are continually reaffirmed through the academic program review process and specifically through evaluation by external reviewers.

4. Program Delivery

- a. The academic program uses technology in its delivery (e.g., distance education, blended courses, “smart” classrooms) in response to current demands and expectations of students.
- b. Faculty understand pedagogic concepts and are able to respond in a positive manner to learning needs.

5. Achievements in Student Learning

- a. The department has clearly defined learning goals, written in action-oriented language. Connections to the University's undergraduate institutional learning goals are clear.
- b. Curriculum mapping shows where students gain content knowledge and provides a guide for continuous content review and improvement.
- c. Minimum standards for competency in the discipline are clearly defined. A "capstone process" exists by which candidates for graduation demonstrate to the faculty that minimum standards have been met.
- d. A student learning assessment plan outlines steps for the ongoing evaluation of learning outcomes. A record-keeping system assures that "closing the loop" on assessment is an ongoing priority (i.e., using the results of assessment to provide continuous improvement to the academic program and to student learning).
- e. Students demonstrate their proficiency in written, verbal, computational, and/or analytical skills related to program content.

6. Support for Students

- a. Expectations of the program (e.g., student preparation, learning outcomes, rigor of coursework) are clearly communicated to students and potential students.
- b. Advising within the discipline is well-organized and supportive to both majors and prospective majors.
- c. Adequate support exists to help students attain mastery in core concepts.

7. Student and External Opinions

- a. Students and alumni indicate satisfaction with their education.
- b. Alumni perceive their education to have been applicable to their choice of profession.
- c. Students and alumni rate favorably faculty expertise, teaching, and commitment to students.
- d. Employers and graduate schools perceive favorably the level of preparation provided.

8. Economic Viability

- a. The cost of the program is relative to societal and student demand.
- b. The program demonstrates potential for financial support through State funding, external fundraising, or both.
- c. Little or no additional investment is required to improve significantly the quality of the program. If additional investment is required, the department has identified potential sources and works with the administration to secure funding.