

Guidelines for Four-Year Strategic Plans for Divisions, Colleges, and Major Organizational Units

Division of Institutional Effectiveness



Updated August 20, 2014

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Guidelines for Four-Year Strategic Plans for Divisions, Colleges, and Major Organizational Units

Division of Institutional Effectiveness

Introduction

These guidelines are provided to the divisions, colleges, and major organizational units in order to facilitate a consistent, clear format for organizational units to utilize in the development of four-year strategic plans. These guidelines are not intended to be unduly rigid, but to provide sufficient structure for consistency and thoroughness.

The guidelines include a designation of the organizational units expected to develop four-year strategic plans, a brief glossary of terms used in planning at NKU to ensure that their meanings are understood and used consistently, and a timeline for the development of strategic plans, as well as a timeline for annual progress reports.

Divisions, Colleges, and Major Organizational Units

The following divisions, colleges, and major organizational units will develop four-year strategic plans that support the University's strategic plan, *Fuel the Flame*, and the strategic directions identified from the university-wide implementation teams.

- **Administration and Finance**
- **Academic Affairs**
 - **Colleges**
 - **Chase College of Law**
 - **College of Arts and Sciences**
 - **Haile/US Bank College of Business**
 - **College of Education and Human Services**
 - **College of Health Professions**
 - **College of Informatics**
 - **Graduate Studies and Research**
 - **Regional Stewardship (Outreach and Engagement)**

- Enrollment Management
- Honors Programs
- Information Technology
- International Education
- Steely Library
- University Programs
- Governmental and Community Relations
- Inclusive Excellence
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Intercollegiate Athletics
- Legal Affairs, Auditing, and Compliance
- Student Affairs
- University Advancement

Glossary of Terms

The following terms are used for developing four-year strategic plans for divisions, colleges, and major organizational units.

Mission Statement – The mission statement will reflect why the organizational entity exists and what its operations are intended to achieve. The mission statement for the division, college, and organizational unit should be in alignment with the university’s mission. The mission statement should be a clear, concise statement that says “This is *what* we are here to do.”

Vision Statement – The vision statement will reflect what the organizational entity intends to *become* within the timeframe of the strategic plan. This is a statement of the division, college, or major organizational unit’s strategic position in the future.

Goal – Goals are broad statements that describe the overarching, long-range intended outcomes for the division, college or major organizational unit. Goals will reflect a theme under which related objectives belong.

Objective – Objectives will identify specific strategic directions for the organizational entity. In addition to specific objectives written by the organizational entity, each division, college, and major organizational units will include their assigned recommended strategies from the implementation teams as “objectives” in their four-year strategic plans. In other words, recommendations from implementation teams are “necessary but not sufficient,” so it is expected that each entity will have additional objectives that were not identified from the work of the cross-divisional implementation teams. Each objective will indicate a link to one or more of the strategic directions from the University’s strategic plan, ***Fuel the Flame***, to which the entity’s objective supports. In addition, each objective will have an expected begin date (academic year) indicated.

Actions – Actions are more detailed actions, activities, or methods designed to accomplish the intended objectives of the division, college, and major organizational unit. Actions may include steps to be carried out over a short range, as in one year, or over a longer range, as in three to five years.

Metric – A metric is a performance measure to gauge achievement of the goals for a division or college. A manageable, informative set of metrics will be identified for the colleges and divisions (excluding GCR, LA, and IE). These metrics will be complementary to, and an extension of, the university performance metrics. For example, each college should have metrics for degrees awarded and first-year retention rates. Metrics will be consistent with and grouped by the goals in the University’s strategic plan, *Fuel the Flame*.

Target - A target is the stated value to be achieved by the organizational entity for each metric within the strategic planning timeline. Targets can be expressed as a total value (e.g., the college will award 1,000 undergraduates degrees in 2017-18) or as a percentage change (e.g., utility costs will decrease by 10% from 2013-14 to 2017-18).

Templates

Appendix A – This is a template for formatting the four-year strategic plan for divisions, colleges, and major organizational units. The template is organized for the entity to provide its mission and vision, followed by the strategic goals, objectives, and actions for the four-year strategic plan. The template includes examples for goals, objectives, and actions, with links to *Fuel the Flame* and the unique numbering for implementation team recommendations.

Appendix B – This is a template to be used to display metrics and targets. As divisions and colleges identify metrics to gauge the achievement of their goals, particular focus should be given to the University performance metrics. Wherever appropriate, entities should adopt similar metrics within their span of control. Organizational entities may also identify other metrics that are appropriate and measurable for their areas. All metrics will be grouped by the goals from *Fuel the Flame*, with the first list paralleling the metrics from the University’s Executive Dashboard, and the second list, where applicable, to include additional metrics, grouped by the goals from *Fuel the Flame*, that are appropriate for the division or college. (*Note: this template is not applicable for the divisions of Governmental and Community Relations; Legal Affairs, and Institutional Effectiveness.*)

Weave Reports

Divisions, colleges, and major organizational units will continue to provide annual assessments of their administrative effectiveness objectives within the WEAVE software. The four-year strategic plans for divisions, colleges, and major organizational units will be retained separately from the Weave system. However, in some cases, units may find selected objectives from their four-year strategic plans that are appropriate to incorporate into their list of administrative effectiveness objectives. Keep in mind that unit

objectives provided in Weave convey the foundation for service excellence, and annual assessments of those objectives provide a level of quality assurance and opportunities for quality enhancements. The unit's actions plans based on assessment results reported in Weave demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement in administrative services. Unit objectives expressed in Weave generally represent ongoing expected outcomes of the unit and are not necessarily represented in the objectives of the four-year strategic plans which include the implementation team recommendations for new or revised services, programs, policies, and procedures.

The timeline for annual report of findings on administrative effectiveness within Weave will continue to be due by **August 1** of each year, and new cycles will open each year on **July 1**.

Timelines

Development of Four-Year Strategic Plans

Divisions, colleges, and major organizational units will develop their four-year strategic plans in collaboration with faculty and staff within the organizational unit. The timeline for development is the following.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| October 15, 2014 | Draft for divisions and major organizational units submitted to President |
| October 15 – December 1 | Feedback from President and Executive Team |
| December 1 | Draft for Colleges submitted to President |
| December 15, 2014 | Final Plan for divisions and major organizational units |
| Dec. 1, 2014 – Jan. 15, 2015 | Feedback from President and Executive Team to Colleges |
| February 1, 2015 | Final Plan for Colleges (in time for 2015-16 budget development process) |

Annual Plan Review Cycle

Each year, divisions, colleges, and major organizational units will provide an annual progress report about their goals, objectives, and actions. Each objective and action will be marked as *Not Started*, *Underway*, *Completed*, *Abandoned*, or *Ongoing*. Entities will include a narrative under each action to provide details on what has been accomplished or to explain areas of difficulty. Narratives should be succinct and concise, providing quantitative details, where appropriate, and/or listing activities, events, awards, presentations, or reports applicable to the designated action. A template and further instructions about the Annual Progress report will be provided in the spring 2015 semester.

Divisions, colleges, and major organizational units will also provide an annual progress report on their performance metrics. Each metric should be listed with the baseline data, the target value, and the interim values achieved for that metric.

Additionally, in coordination with the annual progress report, divisions, colleges, and major organizational units will provide an annual update to their four-year strategic plan. Objectives and actions completed will be removed from the updated strategic plan, and new or revised goals, objectives, and actions may be identified, as needed. Following submission of progress reports and updated strategic plans, the University leadership will review and provide feedback.

The timeline for the annual progress report and update to strategic plans is:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| June 15 | Annual report and updated plan |
| August 1 | Management Response |

Sources of Internal Information

While the information included in this section should not be considered exhaustive, it does include links to reports, surveys, and other collections of information that may be helpful as sources of measurement information or to spark ideas.

[Annual NKU Budgets](#)

Institutional Research Reports Links

Management Information Reports (MIR), enrollment profiles, retention by major, and program review data are available on the k-drive under *Institutional Research – Data Center*.

[Common Data Set](#) (general information on NKU’s admissions policy, enrollment, academic programs, tuition, financial aid, faculty, class size, and so on)

[Student Six-Year Graduation Rates](#)

[NKU six-year graduation rates by ethnicity and gender, and athletes receiving federal financial aid](#)

[National Peer Benchmark Institutions](#)

President’s Advisory Committee for Efficiencies and Savings (PACES)

[Cost Savings Ideas – Master List](#)

[Ways to Assist the University in Saving Money](#)

[Ways to Stretch Your Operating Budget](#)

Surveys

Multiple years of the following surveys are available at <https://access2.nku.edu/irsurveys/login.php>

- Alumni survey
- Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BSSE)
- Destination survey
- Freshman Check In survey
- Longitudinal Assessment of Student Networking (LASN) survey
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Senior Survey

National Survey of Student Engagement (also available on the Institutional Research website)

Sources of External Information

There are a variety of sources of external data available through public agencies or non-profit organizations. Here are some of the more commonly known sources that may be of value in establishing contexts or making comparisons.

U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey – Demographic and economic data broken out by states, counties, or metropolitan areas.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics – Labor market information broken out by geographic areas – employment projections, unemployment information, average wages, Occupational Outlook Handbook, etc.

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Analysis Reports – IPEDS is a national database of information collected from postsecondary institutions nationwide. Published reports of a variety of analyses are available.

IPEDS Executive Peer Tool and Peer Analysis System – Allows for creation of comparative analyses of data from other institutions. Click the Institutional Level button and log in using NKU's user ID, 157447 as both the User ID and Password. Comparisons can be made to NKU benchmark institutions by selecting these institutions by name. A list of benchmark institutions can be found on the Institutional Research web pages at <http://oie.nku.edu/research/other/comparison.html>.

Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education Data Portal – A variety of published reports and links to other sources.

Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics – KCEWS collects and links data to evaluate education and workforce efforts in the Commonwealth. The longitudinal data system tracks high school graduates through college enrollment and workforce participation within the state.

Guidelines Sources

The following source was used in the preparation of this guide:

Hinton, K. E. (2012). *A practical guide to strategic planning in higher education*. Retrieved from Society for College and University Planning website: www.scup.org

Appendices

Appendix A is a template that can be used for formatting a division, college, and major organizational unit's four-year strategic plan. The goals, objectives, and actions provided are for example only and should be removed as the division, college, or organization unit prepares its strategic plan.

Appendix B is a template for metrics and targets. Page 2 includes a few examples that can be removed for the unit.

Appendix A: Template for Four-year Strategic Plan

2014-18 Strategic Plan for <Division, College, or Major Organizational Unit>

I. MISSION:

II. VISION:

III. STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

| | | FTF Link | Imp. # | Begin Date |
|--------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Goal 1: | Create a community of leaders by expanding professional and leadership development opportunities for NKU's staff, faculty, and administrators. | | | |
| Objective 1: | Support professional growth by offering workshops on career planning, mapping, and advancement. | 5.1.d | 187 | 2014-15 |
| | Action 1.1: Survey faculty and staff about requests for professional and leadership development needs. | | | |
| | Action 1.2: Create an effective communications plan to all employers to maximize attendance. | | | |
| | Action 1.3: Schedule professional development workshops at times and dates that will maximize attendance. | | | |
| Objective 2: | Offer staff development programs aimed at improving student success (e.g., (customer) service excellence, master advising) and organizational excellence (e.g., project management, process improvement, Six Sigma). | 5.1.d 5.4.f 1.2.a | 185 | 2015-16 |
| | Action 2.1: Analyze customer service surveys (student surveys and faculty/staff surveys) to determine areas for continuous improvement. | | | |
| | Action 2.2: Create an effective communications plan to maximize attendance. | | | |
| | Action 2.3: Identify subject matter experts on campus to design and deliver selected workshops, and identify other topics for which outside presenters may be beneficial. | | | |
| | Action 2.4: Maintain records of attendance and provide awards and other methods to incentivize attendance. | | | |
| Objective 3: | Insert objective 3 | 1.1a | | |
| | Action 3.1: Insert Action 3.1 | | | |
| | Action3.2: Insert Action 3.2 | | | |
| | Action 3.3: Insert Action 3.3 | | | |

Appendix B: Template for Division and College Dashboard Metrics

| University Executive Dashboard Metrics | Division or College Baseline and Targets for Metrics | | |
|---|--|---------------------|--------------------|
| Gold Standard | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • Degrees conferred (annual total) | | | |
| • Credit hours successfully completed (annual total: summer, fall, and spring) | | | |
| Goal 1: Student Success | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • First-to-second year retention | | | |
| • First-to-second year retention for underrepresented minority students (URMs) | | | |
| • Six-Year Graduation Rates | | | |
| • Six-Year Graduation Rates for URMs | | | |
| • Average Credit Hours Earned by Bachelor's Degree Graduates | | | |
| • Percent of Students that Meet or Exceed Expectations on General Education Core Competencies | | | |
| Goal 2: Talent Development | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • Fall enrollment by level | | | |
| • New transfer students | | | |
| • Undergraduate enrollment for URMs | | | |
| Goal 3: Academic Innovation | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • Percent of credit hours online (full year: summer, fall, and spring) | | | |
| • Percent of Bachelor Degree Graduates with Experiential Learning | | | |
| Goal 4: Community Engagement | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • Experiential Learning courses with community engagement programming | | | |
| Goal 5: Institutional Excellence | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • Grants and Contracts Revenue | | | |
| • Development Resources | | | |
| • Full-time minority faculty | | | |
| • Full and part-time minority faculty | | | |
| | | | |

Appendix B: Template for Division or College Level Dashboard Metrics

| Additional Division or College Metrics <i>(examples provided below)</i> | | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Gold Standard | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • | | | |
| • | | | |
| Goal 1: Student Success | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • Number of students employed on campus | | | |
| • Percent of Bachelor's degrees awarded with honors | | | |
| • | | | |
| • | | | |
| • | | | |
| • | | | |
| Goal 2: Talent Development | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • Percent of students passing licensure exam in applicable programs | | | |
| • Percent of Bachelor's degree graduates employed and/or continuing education | | | |
| • | | | |
| Goal 3: Academic Innovation | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • | | | |
| • | | | |
| Goal 4: Community Engagement | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • Number of participants impacted by community engagement programming | | | |
| Goal 5: Institutional Excellence | Baseline | Latest Value | 2018 Target |
| • Percent of faculty who are tenured/tenure-track | | | |
| • | | | |
| • | | | |
| • | | | |
| | | | |