THE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE’S
ANNUAL REPORT TO FACULTY SENATE AND THE ADMINISTRATION

Submitted to Faculty Senate and the Administration
September 24, 2008

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As in the preceding year, Bill Wilson provided the leadership for USPC’s annual university-wide data collection of unit activities related to Vision Unlimited’s 147 tactics. His Consolidated Report has been distributed to Faculty Senate and the Administration. A summary of this report is in Appendix D.

After the ratification of USPC’s Key Performance Indicators by Faculty Senate and the Administration, Dr. James Lanese undertook the major challenges of establishing baselines, identifying trends, creating new assessment mechanisms where needed and, where data existed, analyzing and interpreting our current status with respect to strategies identified in Vision Unlimited as being central to goal attainment. His involvement and subsequent components of this report, made possible by Dr. Kaul, have been invaluable.

Jeffrey Chen and his staff assisted in providing data relevant to numerous aspects of KPI assessment.

Dave Anderson worked with Theresa Nawalaniec who gathered data from publication indices central to assessing faculty scholarship.

Kim Snell with her usual competence, not to mention patience with USPC’s chair, integrated “hundreds of draft files” into a final report. USPC’s indebtedness to her is second only to our indebtedness for her role in the success of SPUR III.
I. INTRODUCTION

**Purpose of USPC’s Annual Report to Faculty Senate and the Administration**

In 2004, Faculty Senate approved a planning structure that created the University Strategic Planning Committee and charged the committee with submitting an annual report to Faculty Senate and the Administration. On August 29, 2007, USPC submitted its first annual report which outlined the committee’s 2006-2007 planning activities. The report also contained two components that required ratification by Faculty Senate and the Administration: 1) a process for implementing changes in *Vision Unlimited (VU)* as needed; and 2) Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for monitoring and assessing progress toward goal attainment. Both components were ratified. The report also presented initial data by unit on the 147 tactics set forth in VU.

This report provides a summary of USPC’s activities for the 2007-2008 academic year as well as an annual update by unit on VU’s 147 tactics. In addition, this report focuses on KPI and USPC’s efforts to implement: 1) the data collection, analysis and interpretation of existing data; 2) strategies for collecting additional data; and 3) identification of baselines and/or existing trends for the purpose of progress monitoring. Unlike the preceding year’s report, there are no components that require ratification.

**Current USPC Membership**

As originally set forth in the planning structure approved by Faculty Senate in 2004, USPC’s membership is composed of:

- five faculty members selected by Faculty Senate’s Academic Steering Committee
- five administrators appointed by the President
- the Vice Provost of Planning, Assessment and Information Resource Management (ex officio)
- one student representative selected annually by student government.

As of September 2, 2008, the members of USPC were:

**Faculty Members**

- Connie Hollinger, Chair (Psychology, COS)
- Virginia Benson (Urban Studies, Urban Affairs)
- R. D. Nordgren (CASAL, COEHS)
- Eric Ziolek (Music, CLASS)

1 Vacancy created by Ken Keys’ resignation in order to assume additional college-specific responsibilities.
Administrative Members
  David Anderson (Associate Dean, COS)
  Tommie Barclay (Director, Web and e-Initiatives)
  Geoffrey Mears (Dean, Law)
  Claire Rahm (Assistant VP, Campus Support Services)
  William Wilson (CIO, IS&T)

Ex-Officio
  Gitanjali Kaul (Vice Provost, Planning, Assessment and Institutional Resource Management)

1 Vacancy created by Jala Khateeb’s graduation. (Congratulations, Jala and many thanks for your contributions to our planning process!)

Support
  Kim Snell (Administrative Coordinator)
  Landrita McFarland (Secretary II)

Given the atypical cycle of membership (i.e., membership begins mid-year) and other realities, USPC lost several invaluable members:

Faculty
  Susan Kogler Hill, Chair (Communication, CLASS)
  Edward Thomas (Marketing, Business)
  Cheryl McCahon (Nursing, COEHS)

Administrative
  Brian Cook (Associate VP, Business Affairs, Finance and Controller)
  Njeri Nuru-Holm (VP, Institutional Diversity)

Ex-Officio
  Scott Muscatello (Student Member)

II. SUMMARY OF USPC’s ACTIVITIES

During the 2007 - 2008 academic year, USPC focused on or completed the following:

A. Finalizing and submitting its annual report to Faculty Senate.
B. Continuing its practice of meeting with key administrators regarding their contributions to achieving goals set forth in Vision Unlimited (VU).
C. Encountering “top-down” external realities, primarily Chancellor Fingerhut’s Strategic Plan for Higher Education.
D. Adjusting to new members, new Committee Chair and the loss of key members with “institutional memory”.
E. Planning and executing SPUR III.
F. Implementing the assessment of VU’s Key Performance Indicators (KPI).
G. Updating VU’s tactics data from individual colleges and units.
H. Preparing for the 2008 - 2009 academic year.

Discussion of the above activities follows.

Report to Faculty Senate
As required, USPC submitted its first annual report to the Administration and Faculty Senate’s Academic Steering Committee (ASC) on August 29th for review at ASC’s September 5th meeting. The report was subsequently submitted to Faculty Senate by ASC for review.

Two components of the report required Senate ratification: 1) USPC’s proposed process for change or modification of Vision Unlimited; and 2) USPC’s identified key performance indicators (KPI) (see Appendix A). Questions raised regarding disaggregation of student data were addressed, the two components requiring ratification were ratified and the report was accepted by Faculty Senate.

Meetings with Key Administrators

President Schwartz:

On October 4th, USPC met with the President. In the course of this meeting, USPC learned much regarding external realities. The President addressed the North East Ohio Commission (NEOCOM) Report, the state-wide intent to “organize” higher education into a “system”, etc., all of which provided USPC with a “heads-up” to contemplate the fact that VU’s “bottom-up” was about to meet “top-down”.

Provost Saunders:

On November 1st, USPC met with Provost Saunders who provided updates regarding external events (e.g., the “rumored” merger of CSU and the University of Akron) and the University’s response to date. She also requested input from USPC regarding her Position Statement which USPC subsequently provided.

The Provost also announced her intent to create a task force to assist in responding to external realities. It should be noted that, prior to the formation of the Task Force, she solicited names of faculty who might serve on the task force. Sheldon Gelman, Faculty Senate President and Connie Hollinger, Chair of USPC both submitted faculty names for the formation of her Task Force on Engagement and Excellence (TF E&E).

At its last meeting of the year (May 1st), Provost Saunders met again with USPC. She provided an update on CSU’s response to the Chancellor’s plan, the possible implications of CSU’s identified niche and the role of USPC in the upcoming academic year.

Vice President Boyle and Ed Schmittgen:
On November 15th, USPC met first with both Vice President Boyle and Mr. Schmittgen to discuss the Master Plan and capitol planning as they related to the goals of VU. The Master Plan was identified as a possible focus for SPUR III.

Subsequently, USPC met with the Vice President to discuss the status of the Administrative Review Process and budgeting issues. Unlike the Academic Program Review process, a parallel review of administrative units has not been implemented to date. Budget decision making has had minimal if any connection to VU.

Assistant Vice President Rob Spademan:

On March 6th, USPC met with Assistant Vice President Spademan who provided a comprehensive description of the “engaged learning” initiative. He also explained the need in marketing for a university to establish a “brand” and suggested that USPC members check the “engaged learning” website for stories and video examples of our students engaged in learning. He noted that “our city is our campus” had no “deep meaning” and, in one variant or another, was a “brand” set forth by approximately 580 other campuses.

**Encountering “Top-Down”**

Amidst the above meetings, USPC wrestled with issues of its role and VU’s future given rapidly changing external realities, issues which remained on the forefront throughout the academic year. One substantive outcome of its discussions was the decision to focus SPUR III on engaged learning and to begin collaborating with TF E&E in the process.

While “responding to external realities” was beyond USPC’s purview, internal collaboration was viewed as being critical. Meetings between USPC & TF E & E were conducted and collaboration on SPUR III was begun. Of equal, if not greater, importance was the establishment of internal lines of communication.

**Committee Transitioning**

As of December 31st, 2007, USPC’s composition was due to undergo a major transition. Two key faculty members were due to leave: Sue Hill, USPC’s Chair, and Ed Thomas, both of whom had many years of experience with USPC’s formation (i.e., the Planning to Plan Committee) and fledgling existence. Several administrative members were also due to exit USPC but administrative re-appointments were possible. Fortunately for USPC, Bill Wilson and Geoff Mearns were re-appointed, re-appointments that added to USPC’s continuity.

From among USPC’s five faculty members, President Schwartz appointed a new chairperson, Connie Hollinger, who had the longest tenure on the committee among the five faculty members, less than twelve months. Any successful aspect of the transition was a direct function of Sue Hill’s willingness to conduct an intensive “independent study” with the new chair throughout the semester break.
Responding to “Top-Down”

Professor Benson kindly agreed to be USPC’s “monitor” of on-going external events by exploring northeastern Ohio (NEO) universities’ web-sites, attending Chancellor Fingerhut’s public appearances, etc. Her research led her to conclude that CSU’s “bottom-up” strategic plan was rather unique, at least among NEO universities.

As previously noted, Provost Saunders invited both USPC and Faculty Senate to submit names of faculty to serve on her newly created Task Force on Engagement and Excellence, a task force to work on and advise the Provost regarding the University’s response to external realities. Both USPC and Senate did so. USPC recognized the importance of its establishing communication and working relationships with the Task Force, and Barb Margolius, Chair of the Task Force, was quite responsive. Collaboration between the two bodies began (See SPUR III below) soon after the Task Force’s formation.

During spring semester, USPC members studied and discussed the Chancellor’s plan, reviewed the Carnegie Commission’s criteria for community engagement status, etc. With the exception of Provost Saunders and Rob Spademan, plans for meetings with additional key administrators were suspended.

SPUR III: “engaged learning – Challenges and Opportunities”

A key outcome of the collaboration between the Task Force and USPC was the change of focus for SPUR III. USPC’s prior plan to focus on master planning paled in comparison to the timeliness of “engaged learning”. The challenges and opportunities associated with engaged learning became the focus of SPUR III’s discussion groups. Included in SPUR III was an opportunity for all academic deans to provide an overview of their units’ activities with respect to engaged learning.

Two of USPC’s goals for SPUR III were to: 1) increase university-wide participation; and 2) move toward expanded community involvement. Internally, invitations were extended to chairs of standing Faculty Senate committees, in addition to Faculty Senators; student representatives in addition to those representing student government; and representatives from the MAS Advisory Council to provide representation of university staff. In an attempt to expand community involvement, all Trustees were invited along with the chairs of the colleges’ visiting committees. The response and participation of “new” invitees was quite positive. Given the attendance rate and energy that the new invitees brought to SPUR’s discussion sessions, further steps “outward into the community” and increased student representation should be explored for SPUR IV.

A summary of key opportunities and challenges associated with engaged learning that emerged from SPUR III’s discussion groups is provided in Appendix B.

Key Performance Indicators
While there are only twenty ratified strategies, several ratified KPI for assessing a given strategy are multi-faceted, some of which require mechanisms for data collection processes which do not currently exist. For example, one Goal 1 KPI for assessing academic excellence involves identifying the number of faculty and student awards, data for which a collection process does not exist.

With Dr. Kaul’s support, the KPI subcommittee was able to engage Dr. James Lanese to assist with analysis of existing KPI data and develop needed data collection processes for the future. Dean Anderson with the assistance of Theresa Nawalaniec worked to establish baseline data on faculty and student scholarship activities.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI) were developed to create a system that provides the campus community with tangible data and operational instruments for determining how well the plan is progressing. It also allows for highlighting key information about those areas that need more attention.

During the initial development of the strategic plan, a wide array of suggested indicators were examined by USPC at the goal, strategy and tactical levels for the purpose of periodically reviewing and monitoring performance. From this wide array of suggested metrics and suggestions from Strategic Planning University Review (SPUR II) participants the USPC, a smaller and more focused set of KPI were identified that capture progress of Vision Unlimited as a whole. As the name suggests these key indicators include metrics that capture outcomes for each of the six goals on Vision Unlimited. These indicators are designed to be suitable for year-end reviews of the plan.

The KPI are used to indicate broad trends for Vision Unlimited as a whole with a few select core indicators to assess the direction of performance as rising, stable, or declining. To understand what the KPI indicate, it is useful to go beyond the definition of the selected indicators to examine two other issues that are relevant to their development. These two issues are the rationale for their inclusion and the description of the process by which they were identified. KPI for the strategic plan were developed by USPC partially with input from the campus community during the Spring, 2007 SPUR II session. Feedback from the SPUR participants was further refined by USPC to reflect the suitability of these indicators to the campus environment and the feasibility of data collection for each indicator.

Across all Vision Unlimited goals three principles guided the selection of KPI:

1. KPI represent a commonly recognized and standard operational performance measures for an institution’s outcomes (e.g., preparation, retention and graduation of students, number of faculty publications, and grants, awards/recognition, and student credit hours).
2. When appropriate, KPI employ nationally-recognized instruments for data collection with known psychometric properties.
3. To the extent possible, KPI were selected from existing institutional databases thereby enhancing the feasibility of producing annual reports. This readily accessible nature of the KPI allows for identifying immediate baseline data, and avoids creating an unacceptably cumbersome progress monitoring system.

The following section presents the initial effort to clarify the indicators by identifying the available background/baseline data and information as well as current data and information to assess progress toward each goal. Information is presented to explain the goal, its indicator(s) and interpretation of data associated with each.

**Methods Utilized to Compile this Report**

The committee identified twenty key performance indicators to assess the progress of the university toward achieving its six strategic goals. Each indicator and its primary data source within the university were then reviewed to determine the available data and/or information that could be utilized to characterize recent trends, and provide an identified baseline or benchmark to use for progress analysis in the future. It should be noted that assumptions guiding these initial reviews included the following:

- As noted above, and consistent with the committee’s intentions, data was selected and/or derived from readily available sources within the university (i.e., CSU Book of Trends, CSU website information, published reports, and other routinely available nationally-recognized instruments and summaries) to facilitate further analysis.
- Baseline information was derived from the 2006-07 reports. Recent data for each KPI will be included as available. In the event data was unavailable from 06-07 (i.e. NSSE, HERI) the most recent available resource was utilized.
- Concise presentation of information guided the development of the report. Data and information for each key performance indicator is presented in a tabular or narrative format. Brief observations and discussions were used to interpret the information and assess the progress for each goal.

**Reviewing the data: What next?**

In his opening endorsement of *Vision Unlimited*, CSU President Michael Schwartz lauded the plan “as the means for charting the future course of the University and identifies strategies for attaining goals and assessing outcomes.” He further encouraged faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the community—all of our stakeholders—to read, consult websites, and participate actively “in making the plan a reality…we will collectively reach our highest aspiration to establish CSU as the student-focused center of scholarly excellence in the heart of the City of Cleveland.”

*Vision Unlimited* was the result of an ongoing, collaborative process within the university community, which employs a bottom-up, grass roots initiative. The process is designed to routinely obtain feedback from stakeholders.
Monitoring progress under *Vision Unlimited* is designed to be an iterative process that fits the on-going and continuously updating nature of the plan itself. It is anticipated that through this planning process many programs and operations on CSU’s campus will be enhanced. KPI developed for monitoring the plan will not only capture growth and change, but will also provide an interface with the changing external and internal realities of the campus. This scan-and-change process is intended to guarantee that planning is continuous. The KPI will inform the planning process by generating trends and highlighting areas that are either considered strengths or those that need additional focus.

See Appendix C for a summary of KPI data.

**VU’s Tactics**

Bill Wilson implemented the collection process for updating unit progress with respect to units’ previously identified tactics. In addition, units were asked to identify “newly” (i.e., initiated in 2007-08) implemented tactics.

A university-wide reporting template was distributed to the university’s colleges and divisions to solicit their activity updates. The report contained all activities reported last year from each area and provided a simple method to update the status of these activities as well as add any new activities. Once all report responses had been received the committee integrated all unit activities by goal, strategy, and tactic into a single report. This consolidated report was distributed to Academic Steering, the Administration, and each college and division.

Updates from the College of Urban Affairs and from University Advancement are not included in this year’s report due to the significant organizational and leadership transition they have experienced over the last 12 months.

Overall the report reflects close to 700 activities from across campus with over 300 currently active. Approximately 200 activities have been taken to a conclusion.

The Committee is working towards making the reporting process electronic for next year. If resources are available, colleges and divisions will be able to view, update and add to their activities on-line. This will significantly reduce the time and effort required to produce the various reports manually and more importantly make them accessible for viewing by all university personnel.

A summary of the updated VU tactics is provided in Appendix D.

**Summer 2008**

As per an agreement between Provost Saunders and Chairperson Hill, USPC moved to a nine-month academic calendar. Given the summer hiatus, USPC requested and Academic Steering granted a “delay” in the submission of USPC’s annual report. Respectful of this needed “extension”, USPC planned report assignments and work by
members on twelve-month contracts in order to present its report as early as possible in fall semester. Virginia Benson provided her “external monitoring” summary, Bill Wilson waded through unit responses to tactics and the KPI subcommittee assisted by Dr. Jeffrey Chen and Dr. James Lanese marched forward.

In an ever-changing environment, USPC’s Chair found herself in Utah for a five-day American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) conference with Provost Saunders, Vice Provost Kaul, Vice Provost Sutton and Professor Huang who represented the Task Force on Engagement and Excellence. The experience was quite helpful in building communication links and better understanding of USPC’s role in the upcoming academic year.

During the conference, Provost Saunders provided the good news that CSU’s response to Chancellor Fingerhut’s strategic plan is not due until June 2009, not December 2008. Given USPC’s continued commitment to its bottom-up process, a primary challenge for the upcoming year will be, through collaboration and communication, integrating the University’s response to external realities with VU.

Throughout the remainder of the summer, USPC’s Chair met with TF E & E, individual Task Force members, the AAC&U team and others in order to maintain USPC’s involvement in the planning process. It should be noted that the Provost extended a summer contract to the Chair for this involvement.

On August 14, TF E & E presented a draft report to the Provost. The Chair will distribute TF E & E’s final report to USPC members to review and consider its implications for USPC’s future activities.

III. THE 2008-2009 ACADEMIC YEAR

USPC’s first task is to submit its second annual report to Faculty Senate as soon as possible which, according to agreement, is due fall semester. Given no changes in VU’s goals and strategies, the report will not require ratification.

USPC’s primary task will be its involvement with and contribution to the University’s response to the external realities and maintaining communication with internal constituencies involved in that process. Key external realities include the North Central Accreditation visit with its “kick-off” on 9/11/08 and an on-campus visit by the Chancellor in November. Such involvement is viewed as being central to maintaining VU’s bottom-up philosophy while ensuring that VU remains a “living” document that is responsive to external realities.

A new process element to be introduced is the Provost’s engagement of the Learning Alliance (LA) to conduct individual interviews and at least one roundtable much like the Pew Roundtables conducted in the late 1990’s. Of the 30 representatives currently planned to participate in the October LA roundtable, two will be USPC faculty members.
Many, if not all, USPC members will be involved “wearing one hat or another” in one or more of the above activities. 2008-2009 appears to be a busy one for USPC.

Planning for SPUR IV will also be on USPC’s agenda. Given the fluidity of timelines and issues, this planning will also need to be “fluid”. The collaborative work of the Learning Alliance roundtable might: a) preclude the need for SPUR IV; b) contribute to the definition of SPUR IV’s purpose and goals; and/or c) alter the timing, list of invitees and other elements that characterized earlier SPUR’s.

USPC might also decide to examine current membership policies. Current policy stipulates membership on a calendar basis which is out of sync with the rest of the University’s functioning (i.e., student and faculty elections). Policies also initially stipulated two-year committee memberships. Given the necessary learning curve, this timeline is quite short. While the original policy to ensure “new blood” remains important, institutional memory and continuity, especially in these rapidly changing times, have proven to be of equal importance. At present, Dr. Kaul is the only USPC member with a complete “institutional memory” of our strategic planning process to date.

USPC has greatly benefitted from the President’s re-appointment of representatives from the administration. Bill Wilson and Geoff Mearns’ continued presence has been very helpful. Bill Wilson’s leadership in the annual collection of tactics data has been invaluable.

Presently, Virginia Benson and Connie Hollinger are scheduled to end their USPC involvement as of 12/31/08. Ken Keys resigned due to new departmental responsibilities. Academic Steering will appoint a faculty member to replace Professor Keys. Given the above, R.D. Nordgren and Eric Ziolek could be the “senior” continuing faculty members, both of whom joined USPC in spring semester of 2008.