



PHASE 6 - PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION & RESOURCE ALLOCATION

January 21, 2014

Assignment Due Date: Friday – February 28, 2014

Dear Dean, Department Chair or Program Director,

First, we'd like to thank you for your help and participation in our Strategic Planning effort over the past year! What a year we have completed together as a college family. We are confident the direction we've mapped out together will lead us to a bright and successful future. The information included within this letter and other web based resources begins the final phase of our strategic planning effort – Program Prioritization and Resource Allocation. In this phase, budgets will be matched up with strategic initiatives to honor our promise to actually accomplish what we've set out to do.

It needs to be stated up front, program prioritization is not the “cannibalization of programs” described by some. The low hanging fruit, along with a number of lower limbs, are already gone. This initiative is an effort to take a second look at what we have, where we are, and assess that against where we need to go over the next five years. Prioritization provides an opportunity for every College program, office, and function to be creative and explore goals for their program that will outline change and adjustments to address individual student needs as defined in our mission statement, core themes, and strategic vision.

While there have been recent changes in senior leadership, both President Carlston and Vice President Hood are excited about our strategic vision and are fully committed to see the process through to the fulfillment of our mutual goals. We've already begun implementing the strategic plan; for example, the 2% cost-of-living-adjustment awarded on January 1st when added to the 1% on July 1st is progress toward our goal of addressing low salaries by providing a 3% annual adjustment.

The following guidelines will provide direction and guidance in your assignment to assess your program or function and complete the *Program Prioritization Questionnaire*. Please know that all twenty-one members of the Strategic Planning Task Force are willing to assist in answering more specific questions, providing guidance, and talking through concepts and ideas if helpful. As questions arise we suggest you first contact the strategic planning member within your division and/or department as they will likely best understand how your program fits in the overall plan.

1. **PROGRAM DEFINITION:** Each program at the college, defined at a minimum as an account number in the annual budget report, will be required to complete a Program Prioritization Questionnaire. The budget sheet(s) included with this packet define the programs requiring a response under this definition. The questionnaire includes several questions for each of the ten critical assessment criteria as defined in Dickeson's model (*Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services*, 2010, Jossey-Bass). Each employee identified as the account budget

holder will be responsible to submit a prioritization response by the deadlines included in section 7 of this letter.

2. **NON-EXISTING PROGRAMS:** In the course of your program review and response there may be occasions where a recommendation to create a new program is in order. The strategic plan goals to create new and integrated classes and enriched experiences for our students may lend itself to a recommendation for a new, blended, or merged program office or function. You may include such recommendations within your program response or create a separate proposal with the requisite funding needs statement and appropriate justification.
3. **WRITING/WHERE TO BEGIN:** For effectiveness in responding we strongly encourage each department to meet together for a SWOT analysis prior to writing the first draft. This discussion should lead to a number of ideas that will be critical to your overall program response and will allow a framework for discussion to flesh out ideas and concepts for the future. Organized brainstorming was extremely beneficial for the taskforce and we are confident it will help in developing and defining a five year vision for your program along with appropriate goals. Directions for conducting a SWOT analysis along with Las Vegas voting may be located on the strategic planning website under resources.
 - a. Several departments and programs have a presence on both campuses; please be sure to fully engage all of your department/program employees in this assignment regardless of which campus is their primary location.
 - b. It is important to be as specific as possible. Avoid generalities and sweeping statements of what has been or will be done. It will be difficult to provide a high score for vague and leading answers that lack specifics.
 - c. It is also critical to answer the “how” questions in order for the task force to use your submission as justification for budget adjustments, program changes, or integrated efforts. Consider your responses a blueprint for the task force to use in making final recommendations to the administration and board of trustees.
 - d. All answers should be couched in terms of how your program and recommendations tie to the current *mission, core themes, and strategic plan*. All three of these documents are available within the resources page at the Strategic Planning website (www.snow.edu/vision).
4. **RESOURCES:** Resources are available through the strategic planning website (www.snow.edu/vision) which is updated regularly. In addition, we anticipate that every program will look to their related professional websites, organizations, and associations for additional resources identifying national trends, professional development, current initiatives, and other information that will aid in your look toward designing the future of the program. You should also look to your Regent program reviews, accreditation reports, or other existing documents for some of the resource information necessary to respond.

5. **BUDGET:** One aspect of prioritization includes a review of department and organizational budgets. While we initially discussed conducting a zero-based budget exercise, time will not permit for a complete review. To simplify the budget process, each program will receive a detailed list of actual annual expenditures by object code for the past three fiscal years. From this data an average of actual annual expenditures has been calculated. This average number will become the new default budget for your program in future years.

Please include in your response feedback about this new proposed budget amount. If more or fewer budget dollars are needed to fund the goals and new direction of your program, please provide a detailed outline of the resources needed, how they will be utilized, why they are essential, and other pertinent facts to justify your request.

6. **INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH:** With sincere thanks to Beckie Hermansen, the Office of Institutional Research created an electronic dashboard allowing each academic program to generate a wide variety of data elements specific to their program. Among the data elements included is an historic look at the number of sections taught, student FTE, regular vs. developmental sections, faculty trends, and general education trends. This data should be an aid in developing your questionnaire responses. To access the website use the following link: http://public.tableausoftware.com/views/StrategicPlanning/TrendData?:embed=y&:display_count=no
7. **TIMELINE:** The task force goal is to complete the prioritization phase of strategic planning in time for its recommendations to be considered in the development of the administration's FY 2015 budget. Discussions for crafting the new budget will occur between March and May of this year.
 - a. All questionnaire responses are due **Friday – February 28, 2014**, though earlier submission is preferred and appreciated. Non-responsive departments will receive a zero score.
 - b. Task Force members will be divided into teams to read and score all submissions. These reviews need to be completed by **Friday - March 21, 2014**.
 - c. Final task force recommendations developed and written for presentation to the administration will be completed by **Friday – April 25, 2014**.
 - d. College budget ready to be submitted to the College Trustees and Board of Regents on **Friday - May 30, 2014**
8. **PAGE LIMIT:** The page limit is defined as the minimum amount of text and data necessary for each program to define the proposed changes and recommendations for its future vision. We ask that you use the mercy rule by not submitting a doctoral thesis. Please keep in mind there are approximately 230 individual program account numbers in the college budget which will likely yield 3,000 to 5,000 pages of response for task force members to review (and they still have day jobs).

9. **SCORING:** As outlined in the Dickeson model, all program responses will be scored using a rubric for each of the ten criteria. A copy of the Prioritization Rubric can be found at the Strategic Planning website resources page. The general scoring range for each question is from 1 point for a minimal/limited response to 9 points for an exceptional or significant response. The weight of each criterion (totaling 100 points for the entire questionnaire) is outlined on the prioritization form. All programs will be ranked by total score and separated into quintiles. Programs and/or proposals in the upper quintile will be considered for additional program enhancements.

10. **SUBMISSION:** To save the trees of the Brazilian rain forest, all program responses must be submitted electronically and will be reviewed electronically by task force members. For consistency in reading and scoring the hundreds of questionnaires we'll receive we ask that you utilize the questionnaire form when responding. Please note that the boxes for a written response on the (MS Word) questionnaire form will and may expand to the size necessary for your response. Once completed, please submit your program response via email to: vision@snow.edu.

As always, please feel free to contact us as you have questions or would like to discuss your response. We are fully aware of the time commitment this assignment will make but feel we've provided time and resources sufficient for everyone to respond. Thank you in advance for your support of Snow College and the students who choose to further their education with us.

With warm regards,

Marvin Dodge and Melanie Jenkins

Co-Chairs, Strategic Planning Task Force