

*Establishing*  
*a*  
Strategic Planning Process

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER # 1

1. A strategic plan details the steps / actions needed to get us from where we are today to an envisioned destination.

FGCU's 'destination' is spelled out in the University 'mission' and 'vision' Statements. The mission statement sets out what FGCU is about and 'identifies major goals', while the vision statement describes 'the ideal state the institution aims to achieve'.

*Should these statements be reviewed as a part of the Strategic Planning Process?*

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER #2

### 2. An Environmental Scan is:

*'an analysis and evaluation of internal conditions and external data and factors that affect the organization. This analysis is often used to establish a framework for planning'.*

Our Strategic Plan will consider both the context of the organization it is being applied in, and the environment that organization operates in.

*Should the Environmental Scan be done by FGCU or by a contracted external agency?*

*Should its focus be regional, national... both?*

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER #3

3. Strategic Directives – see attached sheets - are broad aspirational guidelines that are born out of the ‘vision’. Each directive has a set of associated objectives.

FGCU’s five directives, developed in 2003, form part of the current 2005 – 2010 strategic plan.

The directives were developed by the university leadership and then presented to the wider community for discussion.

*Should that continue to be the process we use?*

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER #4

4. *Action Plans* or Strategies determine appropriate objectives for each strategic directive, and specify the actions planned to accomplish each of the objectives. These action plans go on to detail resources and estimated costs for each action, and a completion date. They form the core of the Strategic Plan.

*If all these actions are funded and completed as scheduled, then on the date set, the university will achieve its envisaged status.*

The offices - Enrolment, Admissions, Physical Plant etc. all have action plans. Deans and faculty create them for the colleges.

The attached sheet provides a template for action plans and gives two illustrations, one from the University Foundation and another from an academic unit.

*Who else should contribute or suggest action plans for inclusion in the Strategic Plan?*

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER #5

5. A Gap Analysis evaluates the difference between 'the university's current position and the envisioned state'.

For example, the analysis may reveal that:

FGCU currently graduates **50%** of its freshmen class within 4 years

- but the University may desire a **60%** completion rate.

That constitutes a **10%** gap. The analysis would identify strategies and resources to close that gap.

*When should this gap analysis take place?*

*Are there any other analyses that should be undertaken to inform our strategic planning?*

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER #6

6. Strategic Planning begins by posing a series of questions. 'What is the condition of the university at the present time? What would we like it to be? What needs to be done to get to that state? How could that be done most effectively? How long would it take? How much would it cost? What is realistic?'

--- Hayward, 2008.

*Would the process that we have just outlined produce a plan with answers to those questions?*

*Which plan components would provide these answers?*

Hayward, F. M. 2008. Strategic Planning for Higher Education in Developing Countries: Challenges and Lessons. Planning for Higher Education, 36 (3): 5-21

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER #7

7. There are groups, such as Alumni and Board Members, from inside and outside the University who can be considered stakeholders in the strategic plan.

*Who else would be considered stakeholders, and how should we design the strategic plan development process so that they are included?*

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER #8

8. Committees and other groups and agencies with the university are working on other plans. These must articulate with the Strategic Plan. The Safety and Facilities Plan, the Enrolment, Management and Recruitment Plan, and the Instructional Resources Plan are examples of such plans.

FGCU also has a Budget and a Schedule. While the Action Plan lays out what needs to be done, the Budget and Schedule say how those things will be funded and when they will be done.

*What other university agencies have plans that must articulate with the Strategic Plan?*

*How will the process facilitate this?*