

# Strategic Planning Principles and Guidelines

## University of Kentucky

### Planning Guidelines for the 2009-2014 Revisions

For the purpose of these guidelines, a “unit” is defined as an educational unit or administrative unit as established in the introduction to [GR VII, University Organization](#), as follows:

*Any existing or proposed unit that has as its primary mission the performance of educational activities in instruction, research, and service shall be defined as an educational unit if at least one full-time (tenured or tenurable) faculty appointment or its time equivalent is assigned to perform instruction, research, and service in that unit. This assignment provision excludes solely administrative assignments such as the chief administrative officer of the unit. An educational unit is subject to the University Senate review and the periodic review processes. Any unit not meeting the definition of an educational unit is defined as an administrative unit.*

The 2009-2014 unit strategic plans will align with the core components (see [AR 1:4, Part 2, section III](#)) of the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan of the University of Kentucky, which was approved by the Board of Trustees in June 2009. Each unit will incorporate the following features into its plan:

- Update of unit mission, vision and values statements in accordance with the University’s statements
- Relate meaningfully to the University’s 2009-2014 goals, objectives, strategies, and metrics
- Contain a more fine-grained set of metrics and five-year targets that are specific to the department/college/unit
- Translate the University’s Top 20 mandate to the particular circumstances of the unit

Overarching priorities in the UK 2009-2014 Strategic Plan should also be addressed in unit plans, including:

- pursuing innovation in all aspects of the unit’s mission;
- building inclusive excellence (including internationalization);
- increasing efficiencies and accountability (with particular attention to assessing learning outcomes and continuous improvement); and
- promoting entrepreneurship (with an eye toward new revenue generation).

### Unit Strategic Plans

The unit strategic plan establishes the priorities and actions of the University’s educational or administrative units and provides the framework for ongoing budgeting and assessment activities. At a minimum those units scheduled for a program review must have a unit strategic plan that aligns with the university-wide strategic plan. In general this includes all those units reporting directly to the President, Provost, or Executive Vice President, and all units in the next level of the organizational structure (i.e. departments in colleges, Residence Life in Student Affairs, Central Advising in Undergraduate Education, offices within an administrative unit, and so forth). If you have questions about whether or not a unit should have a strategic plan, please contact VP Connie Ray at 257-6384.

Revision of the unit strategic plan is an opportunity to bring together in one comprehensive plan the unit’s knowledge and awareness of current issues in the field, input from multiple stakeholders internal and external

to the University, the vision and aspirations of unit members, and results of all the recent planning and assessment activities conducted by the unit. Examples of documents that may prove useful and meaningful include:

- 2009-2014 UK Strategic Plan
- University-wide strategic plans in priority areas
- 2006-2009 Strategic Plan progress reports
- Annual reports prepared for stakeholders
- Operating budget documents
- Program review Implementation Plans
- External accreditation reports and recommendations
- College Profile Reports
- Institutional surveys and reports
- State and national surveys and reports
- Reports on current trends in the discipline or functional area

The Office of Institutional Research serves as a resource for additional institutional and unit-level information, much of which is available at: <http://www.uky.edu/IRPE/ir.html> .

### **Core Components of the Strategic Plan**

At a minimum, unit strategic plans must include a mission statement, measurable goals or objectives, strategies, and measures of progress (i.e. indicators, metrics, milestones, etc). The following are intended to help units incorporate the basic tenets of institutional effectiveness into their strategic plans:

- Strategic plans usually begin with mission and vision statements. Unit mission and vision statements need to be developed and/or reviewed and revised as necessary. Units with websites should display the mission and vision statements prominently on the website.
- The University of Kentucky Strategic Plan includes a statement of Values; creating a unit-level statement of values is appropriate but not required.
- Under each of the five university-wide goals, the unit strategic plan must establish unit-level goals and/or objectives. The objectives may align with the university-wide goals and objectives or may be other initiatives that the unit will implement to help achieve the overall goal.
- Under each objective the unit strategic plan must identify the strategies, programmatic initiatives, or action steps that will be completed to achieve the objective.
- For each goal or objective, the unit strategic plan must specify the metrics or indicators that will be used to measure success. Ongoing assessment of progress is essential to inform the need for adjustments in strategy and action plans to ensure success.

The following definitions and examples should be used as a reference during the development of unit strategic plans:

**Mission:** A mission is a clear and explicit statement of purpose. At the unit level, it should convey to the reader a good understanding of the nature of programs, services, and/or functions provided by the unit in support of the University's mission.

Goal: A goal is a broad statement of achievement that represents a desired result of the strategic plan. Multiple goals within the strategic plan should be as distinct as possible. Unit goals should align clearly with the University's goals. Given the comprehensive nature of the university-wide goals in representing all mission areas of the University, units should not find it necessary to articulate substantively different goals.

Objective: An objective is a statement as to what the unit will change to achieve the goal. Begin the statement of an objective with words such as increase, improve, enhance, expand, strengthen, reduce, decrease, etc., to communicate that a change from the current status is desired.

Strategy: A strategy is a specific program, project, tactic, or service direction that will be taken to help achieve the objective and goal. Begin the statement of a strategy with words such as promote, develop, establish, initiate, implement, review, evaluate, etc., to communicate the action(s) that will be taken to bring about the desired change.

Metric: A metric is a clearly stated summary indicator of the desired change articulated in the goal or objective. It is a measure of overall performance; it is not an action taken toward achieving a goal or objective. Metrics must be aligned with and developed for each goal area or for each objective; in either case, developing the metric begins by asking the question, "How will we know that we have accomplished our goal or objective?" A metric should convey to the reader information about progress made by the unit in achieving its goals and objectives. Characteristics of indicators may be described as follows:

1. Indicators may be qualitative (descriptive) or quantitative (numeric).
  - a. A qualitative indicator describes an accomplishment resulting from significant effort and allocation of resources that cannot be captured numerically. Often qualitative indicators are accompanied by expectations for completing the activity within a certain timeframe and at a high level of quality. Examples include accurate and timely completion of the university-wide budget, successful implementation of a new organizational structure, or providing extensive public services for which measuring impact within a relatively short period of time is not possible.
  - b. A quantitative indicator represents numerically the extent to which a goal or objective was achieved. To communicate accurately the progress that has been made, a baseline must be established for a quantitative indicator. Examples include setting enrollment and degree production targets; improving retention and graduation rates; setting grant proposal, award, and expenditure targets; achieving a key ranking; securing an amount of additional resources; improving satisfaction ratings; or reducing error rates or customer complaints.
2. Indicators may be input, process, or outcome oriented. Units may use input and process indicators; they must use outcome indicators.
  - a. An input indicator summarizes progress made in attaining the raw materials or resources needed to implement an intervention and bring about an outcome. Examples include the number and quality of new students, faculty or staff; funding acquired to implement a new program; or facilities constructed to support programs, services, and operations.
  - b. A process indicator represents the current status of decisions made about the use of resources to bring about desired outcomes. Examples include the student-to-faculty

ratio; the type and number of degree offerings; span of control; and percent of budget allocated to mission and business operations.

- c. An outcome indicator summarizes progress made in bringing about desired change in the result of educational and administrative processes. Examples include degree completions or graduation rates; student learning achievement, such as licensure exam pass rates or course-embedded assessment results; publications and citations; intellectual discoveries, patents, and royalties; improvement in quality of life; improved timeliness in processing documents; or cost savings due to planned change within the University.

### **Format of the Unit Strategic Plan**

The format of the University of Kentucky 2009-2014 Strategic Plan serves as a guide to units in preparing unit strategic plans. Units should be able to align clearly each goal, objective, or metric in the unit strategic plan with the appropriate goal, objective, or metric in the University Strategic Plan.

### **2009-2014 Strategic Planning Timeline**

Several timelines are important for the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan revision and implementation:

- Revised Strategic Plans for the colleges and other major units reporting directly to the President, EVPFA, and Provost are due by the end of December 2009.
- Unit strategic plans at the department or administrative office level are due by the end of March 2010.
- The first annual progress reports for the 2009-2010 year will be due October 31, 2010.