

Strategic Plan

College of Education, Health and Human Services

Process

The following strategic plan comes from a number of discussions that have occurred over the last six months, including the faculty retreat in August 2008, individual meetings with faculty, leadership team meetings, and CAC meetings. The latter two groups have reviewed earlier drafts of the plan and provided specific feedback. The spring semester will include opportunities to revise the plan, develop more specific plans in certain areas (e.g., research, diversity), and develop criteria for evaluating our success in achieving the broad goals of the plan.

Goals of the Plan

The strategic plan for the College of Education, Health, and Human Services will include seven goals, which in many cases are related. We will stay focused on these goals as our top priorities and they will drive resource allocations in the future.

1. **Quality Educational Experience** – The College of EHHS has a very good reputation for the quality of our programs. We will seek to enhance this reputation. It is important that a quality educational experience in our college be both perception and reality. Some examples of the impact of this goal on decision making include:
 - a. In order to provide a quality educational experience, we need to have sufficient faculty in each program. This means as programs grow, we must increase the size of the faculty. This is not a reward for growth, but a necessity to maintain quality.
 - b. Class sizes need to be appropriate for type and level of the class. While we cannot afford unreasonably small classes, we will maintain class sizes that are reasonable. Clearly, this will vary with some classes becoming larger where the impact on the educational experience is not significant or may actually be improved.
 - c. We will be looking constantly for programs that have the opportunity for building a significant national and international reputation. Resources will be used to either build or maintain these programs. Having these programs will help to build the reputation of the College and will help to enhance the quality of our programs.
 - d. While the needs vary by program, we need to have the facilities, equipment, and technology needed to provide a quality program.
 - e. We offer primarily professional programs and students in these programs need to have opportunities for quality experiences outside of the classroom. Therefore, good partnerships with organizations in the community are essential for student success and consistent with our role as a public institution.
 - f. Students need access to good advising throughout their experience at Kent State. We need to make sure that they have access to this advising.

2. **Increase Research and Scholarship** – The College will be in line with the goal of the university to increase research and scholarship activity. This effort should focus primarily on quality research, publications, and grant activity. In order to accomplish this goal, the College will do a number of things including:
 - a. We will provide leadership for this effort and support for faculty engaged in research activities (e.g., mentoring, grant-writing expertise).
 - b. We will focus on recruiting and retaining faculty who have high levels of research and scholarship activity or have clear potential to be strong researchers.
 - c. Faculty workloads will be appropriate for the level of research activity expected.
 - d. Programs will define what quality research and scholarship activity is in their area.
3. **Increase Diversity** – This is an area needing improvement and has been so for a number years (something that was confirmed during the recent NCATE visit), suggesting that what we have tried has not been productive. In particular, diversity among our faculty is low and diversity among students could be improved. There is plenty of research to show the effects of diversity on students and learning, so this is critical for us beyond simply meeting the expectations of accrediting bodies. It impacts the quality of the educational experience. In order to accomplish this goal, the college will engage in several activities including:
 - a. We will be more aggressive in identifying, recruiting, and retaining diverse faculty. This will be done by committing to focused efforts to identify possible future faculty at conferences, by recruiting more diverse doctoral students and then recruiting them to stay when appropriate, and by developing support systems and mentoring for faculty who come to Kent State. It will also be important to develop a community that is supportive and nurturing for faculty of color and other diverse faculty.
 - b. We will make a special effort to recruit diverse students and develop support systems (e.g., tutoring, social resources) so they can be successful after they arrive. We will focus particularly on recruiting and retaining students from nearby areas with higher concentrations of diversity (e.g., Akron, Cleveland) and students from other countries.
 - c. Building community partnerships that will increase opportunities for our students to engage with diverse populations and diverse issues and for our faculty to conduct research that involves and can impact the communities in our region.
4. **Increase International Activities** – Many programs in the College have been active internationally for a number of years and in many ways we have been leaders in the University. However, there is an opportunity to make this a College-wide area of strength and for us to be recognized locally and nationally as a global College. We also want to make sure that our international activities impact the students and enhance the quality of their educational experience. While there are a number of things that we need to do in order to accomplish this goal, here are several activities on which we will focus:
 - a. Increase study abroad opportunities for students while also exploring funding support for these activities.

- b. Recruit more international students, particularly into target programs we have identified as high demand programs for international students.
 - c. Increase the number of international programs. In order to help with this, we will develop an inventory of exportable graduate programs that can be delivered in several different formats for international audiences.
 - d. Increase international content throughout the curriculum. Support the internationalization of the curriculum by assisting faculty/students in finding the international dimensions of their discipline.
 - e. Support collaborative research with international colleagues and on international themes.
 - f. Support the international exchange of scholars.
 - g. Expand our relationships with universities having similar interests from throughout the world
5. **Increase Enrollment** – While it is unlikely that the college will experience a dramatic increase in enrollment and this is not our goal, we will seek opportunities for enrollment growth that are reasonable. The enrollment growth will largely come from:
- a. New academic programs (limited)
 - b. Academic programs that are experiencing natural growth due to high student interest and market demands
 - c. Improved university and college marketing
 - d. Distance education courses and programs
 - e. Cohort programs at off-campus locations
 - f. Increased numbers of diverse students and international students
 - g. Increased class sizes and new classes (courses in which interest outside of the College is high; generally lower level undergraduate courses)
 - h. Increase in enrollments that come because of the quality of the educational experience
6. **Increase Efficiency and Accountability** – The new budget model requires that we closely examine all that we do to make sure we are managing our resources effectively and that we are all accountable. This goal has several implications:
- a. Workloads will need to be more closely examined and assignments for non-course task must be justified and subject to accountability. This will lead to workloads that are differentiated.
 - b. Individual and program goals should be developed and examined annually as part of an annual evaluation process.
 - c. Smaller class sizes should be limited to cases in which they can be justified as necessary to provide a quality program.
 - d. Programs should be large enough to justify their existence. We cannot afford costly programs in which there is little student interest.
 - e. Programs and schools that are particularly successful at managing and/or increasing resources will receive additional resources.

- f. We work on a plan to restructure the College in a way that should increase the commonalities within schools and increase efficiency.
7. **We will be One College** – Since the merger it is clear that we still operate separately in many ways that make little sense. If we are going to be successful in the future, we must be working together toward common goals and must operate as a college, not six separate schools/departments. This will be accomplished in several ways:
- a. We will NOT use RCM on a school-by-school basis. This would lead to unproductive competition among schools and may lead to some poor decisions. However, we will continue to monitor financial progress in each school and each program and directors and faculty will be held accountable for working toward improvement.
 - b. We will identify initiatives that go across schools to further enhance collaboration. The international initiative will be a primary one, but there will also be other broad or narrow curricular/program initiatives that will bring together faculty and students from across the college.
 - c. We will restructure in a way that brings together programs within each unit that have commonalities that could be further developed. All will include some parts of the “old College of Education” and the “three Schools.”