

# **Strategic Plan for FY 1999-2004**

**Developed by the Executive Planning Council**

**Spring 1998**

**Southwest Texas State University is a Member of the Texas State University System.**

Dear Colleagues:

As we begin the Fall, 1998 semester, I want to thank you for your part in the strategic planning process for the years 1999-2004. The plan you have in your hands is a collaborative effort of many across the institution. The goals, objectives and outcomes were developed by the Executive Planning Council; however, the strategies to implement these goals at the institutional level are the result of a review and synthesis of strategies found in division, school, and departmental plans.

The university plan is an inclusive plan. In order to achieve our institutional goals, we will need the cooperative effort of all levels of the university in carrying out the detailed actions contained in individual plans. It is these actions that will improve our core processes and successfully advance us into the 21st century.

I am confident that Southwest Texas State University is destined to become one of the premier universities in the state of Texas. I believe this because I believe in your commitment to make it happen.

Sincerely,

Jerome H. Supple

President

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**VISION\***

*Southwest Texas State University will be recognized as one of the top three public universities of choice in Texas. We will be known for our learner-centered environment, offering students the advantages of both a small college and a large multifaceted university, valuing research and creative activity, and emphasizing the central importance of teaching and learning.*

*To give life to this vision, we embrace the following core values for SWT.*

**SWT'S CORE VALUES**

*We, the faculty, staff, and students at SWT, affirm that our University exists to enrich our minds and to humanize our hearts so that we may contribute to the betterment of humanity. We are dedicated to providing a curriculum and educational experience that develop our capacities, not only to analyze critically and*

**SOUTHWEST TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 1999 TO 2004**

**Revised : September 2000**

Southwest Texas State University has recently concluded a two-year planning process to guide its course into the 21st century. The goals and objectives for the 1999 to 2004 planning cycle and the outcomes to be used to track our accomplishment of these goals are listed here. Included are institutional strategies, developed after a review and synthesis of strategies written at the department, college and division levels.

Detailed action plans that will contribute collectively to the successful completion of SWT's goals are found with ever-increasing specificity in the division, school, and department plans.

**GOAL I: ENHANCE OUR QUALITY AND PRESTIGE**

**Objective: Improve student learning through continuous assessment and modification of teaching, curriculum, and programs.**

**Strategy:**

1. Maintain a fully functioning system for periodic academic program review.
2. Encourage faculty to participate in faculty training/professional development activities in order to continuously improve teaching methods. **(NEW!)**

**Outcomes:**

- 1: All academic departments will have plans in place to assess student learning and document improvements.
- 2: All academic departments will use assessment data to monitor and, when necessary, modify teaching, curriculum and programs to enhance student learning.
- 3: Teaching, curriculum, and academic programs are modified and improved as a result of faculty development efforts. **(NEW)**

*think creatively, but also to reason ethically and feel compassionately.*

*To guide us as we learn to evaluate the consequences of our actions --not to indoctrinate either intellectually, morally, or religiously--we articulate the following core values:*

*- The lifelong pursuit of academic excellence. We value the seeking of knowledge, including the freedom to engage in meaningful debate and the responsibility to continually explore new possibilities for learning.*

*- The nurturing of individuals. We value the opportunity to develop the potential of every individual of our diverse community.*

*- The cultivation of character. We value the modeling and teaching of honesty, integrity, diligence, courage, compassion, fairness, and respect.*

*We see the articulation of this statement as ongoing. Its publication should serve to keep dialogue continually alive.*

*Through our shared vision and our common values, we seek to accomplish our critical university mission.*

## **MISSION**

### **Objective 2: Increase the volume and significance of scholarship, creative activity and sponsored programs.**

#### Strategies:

1. Aggressively pursue external funding opportunities that support activities consistent with the strategic plan.
2. Colleges will set targets to increase volume and significance of research and creativity to meet university goal of \$30,000,000.
3. Celebrate and publicize faculty/staff awards and achievements. (NEW)

#### Outcomes:

- 4: Increase externally funded research and sponsored programs to \$30 million.
- 5: Annual awards will increase each year.
- 6: Colleges will meet targets to increase volume and significance of research and creativity.
- 7: Recognized accomplishments will increase annually. (NEW)

### **Objective 3 : Improve service to key constituents.**

#### Strategies:

1. Plan course offerings and classroom schedules on-campus and through distance learning in a manner that meets best practice standards, with special attention to night and evening delivery.
2. Provide timely and accurate information for decision-makers.
3. Increase staffing levels, training, and the technology necessary to provide exemplary education and services to constituents.
4. Offer training and advocacy to increase participation in SWT Quality Initiatives.
5. Maintain a fully functioning system for periodic staff process review.

#### Outcome:

- 8: All departments and divisions will use assessment data to monitor and, when necessary, modify processes to enhance service.
- 9: Increases staffing levels, training, and use of technology. (NEW)

### **Objective 4: Improve prospective student and customer perceptions of SWT's excellence.**

#### Strategies:

*Southwest Texas State University (SWT) was established in 1899 to address the state's need for excellent teachers. Throughout its rich history, SWT has responded to the changing needs of our state. Today, SWT is a comprehensive, culturally diverse university offering undergraduate and graduate instruction to citizens across Texas as well as those from other states and nations. SWT is also a metropolitan university, providing special service to the greater Austin-San Marcos-San Antonio region. Although the teaching-learning experience, supported by research and creative activity, is the heart of SWT, we also encourage involvement in extra curricular activities and the development of leadership. We teach the skills that will prepare students for tomorrow's careers, and we introduce them to ideas and experiences that will broaden their lives forever as we pursue the following purposes:*

*- Undergraduate Education. To provide undergraduate students with a broad base of knowledge, college-level competencies, and specialized courses of study selected from a comprehensive range of undergraduate programs.*

1. Develop new academic programs in accordance with the Academic Plan.
2. Increase the \$60 million centennial campaign goal to \$120 million.
3. Increase the number of endowed chairs from 10 to 15.
4. Increase publicity for alumni, faculty, staff and student achievements.
5. Increase SWT's US News ranking from Tier 3 to Tier 2.
6. Achieve national recognition for outstanding graduate and undergraduate programs.
7. Schools will increase emphasis on graduate school SCH productivity.
8. Increase the University's presence in the community by sponsoring local activities. (NEW)

Outcomes:

- 10: Regional and national recognition of SWT's alumni, faculty, programs, staff and students will increase with 1997 as the base year.
- 11: SWT will be among the top three most desirable public universities in Texas based on number of applications.
- 12: At least 10% of annual SCH will be generated at the graduate level.
- 13: SWT will be competitive with funding initiatives of university peer members within the National Society of Fund Raising Executives, the Council for Administration and Support of Education, and will be recognized in the Chronicle of Higher Education.
- 14: SWT will be increasingly recognized locally for its community support. (NEW)

**Objective 5: To provide high quality, reliable, and responsive information and instructional technology support services to all students, faculty and staff.**

Strategies:

1. Improve the delivery of efficient, enhanced, and collaborative support and services.
2. Foster the development of both innovative and proactive information technology expertise that assists the University in planning for effective use of both current and future technology.

Outcomes:

- 15: 100% of students have access to the mainframe.
- 16: Online registration is available.
- 17: Online degree outlines are available.
- 18: Online support services will increase with 1999 as a baseline. (NEW)
- 19: The number of courses and supplemental instruction offered online will increase annually with 1999 as a baseline. (NEW)

**- Graduate Education.**  
*To provide graduate students the opportunity to expand their knowledge in a variety of specialized programs through research, creative expression, and advanced study.*

**- Scholarship.** *To contribute to the greater body of knowledge in specific disciplines through research, scholarship, and creative expression.*

**- Service to State and Community.** *To serve as a professional, educational, and cultural resource to the local area and the larger community by providing consultation, advice, and special services.*

**- Enriched Learning Community.** *To develop a technology-enhanced learning community reflecting the rich diversity of the state.*

**- Campus Environment.** *To sustain an environment for learning and professional development that is supportive, inclusive, and welcoming.*

**- Personal Growth.** *To develop the full potential of each individual.*

***We fulfill this mission by adopting goals and implementing strategies that we identify in SWT's Strategic Plan.***

20: Faculty/staff computer access will be maintained at the level of current technology. (NEW)

21: Up-to-date departmental web pages are available and accessible. (NEW)

## **GOAL II: INCREASE THE RETENTION AND SUCCESS OF STUDENTS**

**Objective: Improve the retention and graduation rates of SWT students to achieve an enrollment of 26,000 by 2004.**

### Strategies:

1. Implement a comprehensive freshman year experience plan.
2. Assure that high quality advising services based on a continuous improvement models are provided.
3. Expand the use of Supplemental Instruction and other supplementary instruction methods.
4. Improve student recruitment, commitment, enrollment, orientation and financial aid programs and services.
5. Monitor the D, F, W rates of the top 50 SCH courses, focusing on core curriculum courses, and develop plans for corrective action any time that individual course rates fail to meet best practice standards for student success.
6. Assure that every academic department has activities in place to engage new majors in departmentally-based activities during their first semester at SWT.
7. Increase student scholarships and grants.
8. Schools, through advising centers or departments, will develop strategies to monitor degree progress of majors, with special emphasis on providing degree summaries to all majors between 90 and 110 hours.
9. Schools, through advising centers or departments, will develop monitoring strategies for upper division stop-outs to ensure their enrollment of majors in subsequent semesters.

### Outcomes:

22: One-year retention of first-time freshmen will be at least 75%.

23: One-year retention plus graduation of new transfers will be at least 85%.

24: One-year retention plus graduation of new graduate students will be at least 80%.

25: Of the freshmen, sophomores, and juniors who are enrolled 12 months later, at least 80% will progress to the next class level and/or graduate from SWT.

26: Between the 12th class day and the last class of each semester, the course drop rates by level of the course and level of the student will be 5% or lower.

27: Six year graduation rates will exceed six year graduation rates of peer institutions in the state of Texas.

*We demonstrate our accountability through careful assessment and continuous improvement.*

### **GOAL III: PROMOTE ETHNIC, GENDER AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE SWT COMMUNITY**

#### **Objective 1: Assure that the campus climate represents diverse stakeholders.**

#### **QUALITY STATEMENT**

*Quality at SWT is the philosophy that guides us in creating a university that cherishes teaching and learning, honors research and scholarship, values service, celebrates excellence, supports diversity, promotes lifelong learning, and develops the full potential of all members of the university community.*

*We emphasize continuous improvement that is driven by the needs of the people we serve and the ideals we treasure. We rely on teamwork, collaboration, communication, and respect for one another. We reach decisions based on data collected by a sound assessment program and identification of the best operating practices.*

*Each of us takes personal responsibility for improving the educational enterprise of SWT.*

#### **SWT'S STRENGTHS**

*SWT's 100 year history*

#### **Strategies:**

1. Recruit, retain and maintain faculty and staff representative of the state's diversity.
2. Enhance funding for minority student scholarships and endowed professorships through the SWT Development Foundation with corporate and foundation support.
3. Expand academic curriculum to include courses related to ethnicity, gender, and diversity issues. **(NEW)**
4. Increase faculty/staff awareness of diversity issues. **(NEW)**

#### **Outcomes:**

- 28: SWT will show improvement in institutional climate as measured by a campus-wide survey.
- 29: For the retention and success outcome targets in Goal II, all ethnic and gender groups will achieve stated targets.
- 30: New students, faculty and staff will more closely reflect the ethnic and gender distribution of their appropriate pools.
- 31: The proportion of international students will reach the average for SWT's AAUP-IIA Texas peers.
- 32: Number of diversity-related courses offered will increase. **(NEW)**
- 33: Offer faculty/staff training on diversity-related issues. **(NEW)**

### **GOAL IV: INCREASE SWT'S LEADERSHIP AND PRESENCE IN THE SURROUNDING METROPOLITAN AREA, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS IN NORTH AUSTIN AND WILLIAMSON COUNTY**

#### **Objective 1: Develop appropriate academic programs and support services responsive to the higher education needs of the area.**

#### **Strategies:**

1. Implement a North Austin/Williamson County (NA/WC) Multi-Institution Teaching Center (MITC) proposal as submitted to the Coordinating Board (CB).
2. Develop additional degree proposals based on ongoing needs assessments for additional degree programs to be offered at the NA/WC MITC following CB approval.

*has resulted to-date in a strong public institution of 21,000 students. The characteristics that make SWT strong, that describe our "niche" in higher education in Texas, that contribute to the recruitment and retention of our students, faculty, and staff, are listed here. It is upon this strong foundation that SWT will build to reach its vision for the future.*

- *a strong focus on teaching;*
- *an historic contribution to teacher education;*
- *a welcoming atmosphere--a place where everyone, including the President, says "Hello", contributing to a sense of community despite our size;*
- *a beautiful location on a hill in the town of San Marcos, on the edge of the Texas Hill Country at the head waters of the San Marcos River;*
- *a strong reputation with employers for well-trained workers;*
- *high quality, enthusiastic, accessible faculty;*
- *graduate programs that*

### Outcomes:

- 34: Programs that are consistent with prioritized documented needs will be delivered at the MITC.
- 35: Graduate degree programs at the MITC will be designed to be completed within three years.
- 36: 1-800 toll-free service is provided for incoming calls to SWT from Travis and Williamson counties.

### Objective 2: Increase the breadth of cooperative initiatives and partnerships.

#### Strategies:

1. Maintain and expand articulation agreements with major community college feeder institutions.
2. Offer new external alliances for educational, cultural, advisory, and service partnerships.

#### Outcome:

- 37: Alliances with private industry, government agencies, education, and foundations will increase with 1997 as a base year.



*serve working  
professionals  
along the IH  
35 corridor;  
and efficient  
use of  
resources.*

\* The SWT mission statement was approved by the Board of Regents on August 13, 1998. Approval by the Coordinating Board is set for October, 1998.

## **PLANNING PROCESS**

During the two-year planning process that culminated in the FY1999-2004 strategic plan, the Executive Planning Council engaged in six major retreats. During these retreats and other EPC meetings, the Council developed the purposes of planning, the key statements to guide all planning, drafted the four university goals with attendant objectives and outcomes, and charted the course for planning at the institution which was communicated through the Planning Guide. In addition, EPC in Spring 1998 approved all division and school plans and authorized the development of the automated institutional plan monitoring system.

The planning process was improved by the implementing the recommendations of the campus community and external consultants. In addition, the President directed all planners to focus on the improvement of their core processes as the ultimate outcome of their planning.

### **Purposes of Planning**

EPC has established the purposes of planning at SWT that are listed here.

- Guide the institution toward achieving its vision through goal and objective statements.
- Reflect institutional goals and objectives in the development of the university budget.
- Assess progress toward achievement of goals and objectives at all levels with the use of outcome targets.
- Support the integration of planning, budgeting and assessment at the department, school, division and institutional levels.
- Involve a large number of the university community in the development of plans at various levels of the institution.
- Direct the use of assessment results to improve processes and revise plans.

- Report to the community on the progress toward achieving our goals and objectives.

## **Responding to Recommendations**

Development of the current SWT planning process began with an assessment of the process used during the prior cycle for FOCUS 2000: Strategic Plan 1994-2000. The process used to develop the 1999-2004 plan was informed by recommendations from an external consultant, the university community, and the State Auditors.

External Consultant. In the Spring of 1995, SWT hired an external consultant to review SWT's planning process and make recommendations for improvement. Of the 22 recommendations (Attachment I) she made, SWT as of Spring 1998 had implemented 19 and has plans in place to operationalize the remaining three.

University Community. In the Summer of 1996, The Executive Vice President and the Chief Planning Officer visited with each academic and administrative council on campus to gather their sentiments regarding improvement to the planning process. Some of their suggestions mirrored those of the external consultant: improve assessment/monitoring, revise the university goals, enhance the President's leadership profile in planning. All these recommendations have been put into place. (For a complete list, see Attachment II.)

State Auditor. In Fall 1996, the State Auditor's Office conducted a management audit of SWT's administrative functions. As a result, they made three recommendations regarding the planning process. These recommendations involved improving the quality and consistency of plans on campus, improving assessment, and instituting a university-wide quality planning and assessment process. (See Attachment III.) Plans are in place to fulfill these recommendations.

## **Developing the Key Statements**

Several statements were developed by EPC to guide them in their development of the university plan, and offered to the institution to guide them in the development of plans at lower levels. These key statements included the institutional vision, mission statement, core values, quality statement, purposes of planning, and environmental scan. These planning tools were used as reference and context within which EPC developed the four institutional goals, objectives and outcomes. To evaluate strategies for priority funding, EPC developed a list of criteria.

## **Charting the Direction of Planning**

EPC made the conscious decision to avoid top-down planning this cycle, based on input from the departments. Therefore, EPC did not share the institutional outcomes with the community while they were developing departmental plans. EPC did not want department planners to be distracted by the outcomes, that are designed to monitor institutional progress, not specific departmental activities.

As a result, the detailed directions and suggestions for planning at the department level were the focus of the Planning Guide. Departments were encouraged to follow traditional planning steps (environmental scan, development of vision/mission/SWOTS, etc.) prior to brainstorming their goals, objectives, and/or strategies. The President's May 1997 planning letter outlined the major emphases for the planning period. Later in the summer, similar planning communiques came from the vice presidents and deans that focused planning for particular areas.

## **Improving Core Processes**

A major change in the planning process was the focus of departments on developing strategies to improve their core processes and linking those strategies to the four institutional goals. The structure of the plan would result from the departments asking themselves: Where are you now? (analysis of current status) Where do you want to be? (goals and objectives) How will you know when you get there? (outcome targets and measures).

The institutional core processes identified by EPC were: teaching, learning and student development; research, scholarly and creativity activity; and service. Additionally, several supporting core processes were identified for institutional attention during the planning process: enrollment management; human resource management; financial resource development and management; information services support; and physical facilities development, utilization and maintenance.

## **Approving Plans**

In early Spring 1998, Executive Planning Council heard, critiqued and approved strategic plans at the school and division levels. At the same time, as part of SWT's 1999 Southern Association for Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation process, a group of more than 50 faculty and staff read every unit plan on campus to assess how well their strategies will move the University toward achieving its four goals. These readers have prepared four reports, one for each of the four goal areas, which the Strategic Issues Committee will review and compile into an institutional report. The recommendations resulting from this analysis, plus those that develop from the SACS review, will be presented to Executive Planning Council to improve the SWT strategic plan when it is updated in 1999.

## **Monitoring Plans**

To facilitate monitoring of the university plan, a team has developed a mainframe computer model to track progress on each strategy at the school and division levels. This system will be ready to receive planned strategies and outcome measures in Summer 1998. The actual performance data on outcome measures will be entered in early Fall 1999 for discussion at EPC. As resources allow, this model will be offered to lower levels in the institution so that departments can benefit from the automated process, and so that the institution will have a better sense of how well it is progressing on its planned activities.

## **Prioritizing Strategies for Funding**

The Planning Coordination Team developed a set of criteria for prioritizing planning strategies for funding purposes. This set was edited and approved by EPC, and used during the June EPC retreat to make funding recommendations to PC.

The criteria are in the form of questions, to be asked and answered by each member of EPC in their review of division strategies.

- What is the impact on improving the university core process?
- What is the cost/benefit of implementing the strategy?
- Is the infrastructure in place for the strategy? Keep in mind that the infrastructure may be required elsewhere in the University, not necessarily in the specific department or school implementing the strategy.
- How likely is the strategy to improve or achieve the university outcome targets?
- What level of new funding is required for the strategy?
- How many units/areas are impacted or required to implement the strategy?

## **Integrating Planning, Budgeting, Assessment and Quality**

SWT is striving to fully integrate the processes of planning, budgeting, assessment and quality to improve the delivery of education and other services to all the institution's customers. Lack of integration of these processes can lead to results that actually cancel out the effects of one or more of the initiatives. For example, if a plan does not drive the budget, the budget will drive the plan. If resources are not allocated to implement a plan, the plan becomes an empty document. If quality is seen as a separate initiative, it will not be central to every process, in every office, to every individual on campus. If the results of assessment are not used to improve processes, to improve quality, to change plans for the future, then assessment too becomes an empty process.

To shepherd SWT toward this future integration, the President established the Planning Coordination Team comprised of the chief planning, budgeting, assessment, quality and enrollment management officers on campus. This group recommends planning policies, procedures, and documents to the Executive Planning Council. They assure that quality principles are used in each of their areas. They assure that planning and budgeting calendars and processes are linked. They monitor the use of assessment to improve planning and implementation of strategies on campus.

## **MATRIX OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND SUPPORTING PLANS**

The purpose of this matrix is to show the contributions of existing plans to the four university goals for FY1999 to FY2004. The criteria for including plans in this matrix are: future orientation, breadth of impact and contribution to university goals.

SUPPORTING PLANS	<u>GOAL I</u>  QUALITY & PRESTIGE	<u>GOAL II</u>  STUDENT RETENTION	<u>GOAL III</u>  DIVERSITY	<u>GOAL IV</u>  METROPOLITAN
Access and Equity 2000 Plan		X	X	
Academic Plan	X	X		X
Assessment Plan	X			
Athletic Excellence Plan	X	X	X	
Campus Master Plan	X	X		
Division of Academic Affairs	X	X	X	X
Division of the Executive VP	X		X	X
Division of Finance/Support Svcs	X		X	
Division of Student Affairs	X	X	X	X
Division of Univ. Advancement	X	X	X	
Enrollment Management Plan		X		
HEAF Allocation Plan	X	X	X	X
Info. Resources Strategic Plan	X			X
Management Improvement Plan	X			
Plan for Women			X	
Quality Implementation Plan	X			
Regional Partnership Development	X			X
SCH Targets Plan	X		X	
School of Appl. Arts/Technology	X	X	X	X
School of Business	X	X	X	X
School of Education	X	X	X	X
School of Fine Arts	X	X	X	X
School of Health Professions	X	X	X	X
School of Liberal Arts	X	X	X	X
School of Science	X	X	X	X
Six-Year Faculty Salary Plan	X		X	

Tuition and Fee Increase Plan	X	X	X	X
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## KEY INSTITUTIONAL PLANNERS

The following major groups developed SWT's institutional Strategic Plan, for FY1999-FY2004.

### PRESIDENT'S CABINET

The President's Cabinet provides information to the President on significant issues, concerns, and activities, and serves as the primary advisory group to the President.

Dr. Jerome H. Supple, President

Dr. Michael L. Abbott, Executive Vice President

Dr. Cathy A. Fleuriet, Assistant to the President

Dr. Robert D. Gratz, Vice President for Academic Affairs

Mr. Gerald W. Hill, Vice President for University Advancement

Mr. William A. Nance, Vice President for Finance and Support Services

Dr. James D. Studer, Vice President for Student Affairs

### EXECUTIVE PLANNING COUNCIL

The Executive Planning Council recommends to the President the broad strategic direction for the University and planning priorities for resource allocation and reallocation. It gives direction to the Chief Planning Officer for development of the planning process, for special studies, etc. EPC oversees the integration of all planning on campus. In addition to the members of President's Cabinet, above, and members of Planning Coordination Team (ex-officio), below, EPC members include:

Dr. John Beck, Jr., Dean of the School of Education

Dr. Jon D. Bible, Chair of the Faculty Senate

Dr. Ronald C. Brown, Acting Dean of the College of General Studies

Dr. Sue McCullough, Chair of the Council of Chairs

Dr. Patrick Cassidy, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. T. Richard Cheatham, Dean of the School of Fine Arts and Communication

Dr. Paul R. Gowens, Dean of the School of Business

Dr. G. Jack Gravitt, Dean of the School of Liberal Arts

Dr. Stanley C. Israel, Dean of the School of Science

Dr. Rumaldo Juarez, Dean of the School of Health Professions

Dr. G. Eugene Martin, Dean of the School of Applied Arts and Technology

Dr. Charles Pascoe, Chair of the SACS Steering Committee, ex officio

Dr. Robert Smallwood, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Director of Assessment

Dr. Marion Tangum, Associate Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs

Dr. J. Michael Willoughby, Dean of the Graduate School

## **PLANNING COORDINATION TEAM**

PCT prepares planning documents; recommends planning processes; oversees the integration of planning, budgeting, and assessment; and conducts special studies at the request of EPC. In addition to Dr. Fleuriet, listed in PC above, and Dr. Smallwood, listed in EPC, the members of PCT include:

Dr. Leellen Brigman, Associate VP for Student Affairs and Director of Enrollment Management

Mr. Gordon Thyberg, Director of Budgeting

**Attachment I**

## **PROGRESS REPORT - SPRING 1998**

### **INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT'S 1995 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **TO IMPROVE STRATEGIC PLANNING AT SWT**

Listed here are the 22 recommendations made by Dr. Denise Watts in her audit of the strategic planning process at SWT. The asterisks indicate those that have been implemented. The few remaining with bullets have plans in place to operationalize them.

- Develop and communicate an institutional vision.
- Encourage the President to continue to be both active and visible in the process.
- Identify a clear purpose(s) for the institutional planning process. The process design should be geared to accomplishing this purpose(s).
- Reconsider the charge and membership of the University Planning Committee in light of the emergence of the Executive Planning Council.
- Clarify the planning process such that the responsibilities and the expectations for committees, the chief planning officer, line managers, and others is identified.
- Monitor the utility of the impact statements as a vehicle for conveying internal and external information and recommendations within a strategic process.
- Evaluate the meaningfulness of the planning process every year or two.
- Identify no more than four broad directions unique to the University vision that will be pursued through the long-term.
- Develop no more than five or six goals (if both goals and directions are desired) for the planning horizon.
- Reduce the number of directions, goals and/or objectives at the university level.
- Make plans at all levels both more realistic and more future-oriented by strongly endorsing fewer but more challenging and appropriate goals/objectives.
- Both directions and goals should receive early and substantial input from the university community.
- Establish goals and directions that can be measured directly or through accomplishment of specifically approved projects.
- Make departments, schools, and divisions specifically accountable for funds allocated for planning purposes.
- Establish a university-level monitoring system.
- A tie between planning and resource allocation should be realized and communicated.
- Allocate some of the five percent reallocation money to planned initiatives other than salaries.
- Support the current effort to forge, at least, a conceptual linkage between the planning process, Quality, assessment, and budgeting.
- Develop the Quality initiative, the assessment initiative, and the planning process with the clear intent to link them in some meaningful way in the future.
- Obtain as much first-hand information as possible to the university community on the institutional directions, the plan, and the process.



- Use an abbreviated format such as a brochure or pamphlet to publish the executive summary, at least, of the university plan and perhaps other associated plans.
- Outcomes of the planning process should be routinely communicated to the university community.

Source: An Evaluation of the Strategic Planning System at Southwest Texas State University: A Consulting Report Submitted to the Office of Internal Audit at Southwest Texas State University by Denise C. Watts, PhD, Jacksonville, Alabama, May 29, 1995.

## **Attachment II**

### **INPUT FROM THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY**

In discussions with all academic and administrative councils in the Summer of 1996, Dr. Michael L. Abbott, Executive Vice President, and Dr. Susan R. Griffith, Assistant Vice President for Planning and Administration, gathered the sentiments of the campus community regarding improvements in the planning process at SWT.

As a result, the following actions were incorporated into the planning process for the FY1999-2004 planning cycle:

#### Enhance the Leadership Profile in the Planning Process

- Faculty Senate and Staff Council will be consulted regarding the revised planning process.

#### Improve Assessment/Monitoring Activities

- Assessment and accountability are built into the process. Annual reports from departments will be used to write the school report on the academic side, the division report on the administrative side. School reports will be used to write the Academic Affairs Division report. These reports will serve as "accomplishment reports" as well as assessment/monitoring reports, since each level above will provide feedback to the next level below on the progress toward goals and objectives.
- EPC has developed outcome targets for the institutional strategic plan, which may be shared during early planning stages at the discretion of the vice presidents and deans; however, they will definitely be included in the published strategic plan. Planners at other levels will develop outcome targets for the goals and objectives in their plans.

#### Revise the University Goals

- The "prestige" and core process improvement emphases from the EPC March 1996 retreat are in

the revised plan. The number of goals/objectives has been reduced and they have been prioritized.

### Improve Resources/Information for Planning

- The Institutional Research and Planning Office and the Planning Coordination Team (PCT)\* developed an environmental scan, which several faculty reviewed. President's Cabinet has selected a few external variables that it feels are of greatest import at the institutional level at this time. Also included in the Planning Guide for reference is the environmental scan developed for the state Agency Plan in Spring 1996 by PCT and approved by the Executive Planning Council.
- Experts in aspects of planning will be available to conduct workshops on various topics tailored to the needs of departments, schools, and divisions.
- Institutional Research and Planning will work with Deans and Chairs to identify and satisfy as possible their data needs during the planning process.
- At the discretion of the Deans and Vice Presidents, the Planning Guide will be introduced at each academic and administrative council on campus. If additional data or information needs are identified, supplementary material will be added to the Guide.
- Instructions in the Planning Guide specifically state that departments are expected to focus on a few objectives each year; they are not expected to "fill in the blank", to incorporate all items from upper level plans.

### Maintain Emphasis on the Quality Initiative

- Most of the members of the Planning Coordination Team are trained in quality planning tools and techniques and will serve as resources during the planning cycle, as well as other experts from the faculty and staff areas.

### Modify the Format of the Plan

- A standard format will be designed for submitting department plans with input from the department in the Fall of 1997.
- Departments will be asked to guide their planning by asking themselves these questions:
  1. Where are you now?
  2. Where do you want to be in the future?
  3. What will you do to get to your desired future?
  4. How will you measure your progress along the way?

## Allow Flexibility Within a Framework

- Strict top-down planning is not dictated. Departments will be asked to develop their plans with reference to the university goals phrased as "planning questions". School and division plans will be developed that highlight certain activities for resources, and/or highlight cross-school/divisional issues for implementation. Collaboration and on-going dialogue among the departments and within the school/division, as well as across schools and divisions, is expected.

## Improve the Planning Timeline

- Departments will begin planning in Summer 1997 for the FY1999-2004 period. For the first submission in the Fall 1997, the most detailed strategies will be expected for FY99.

## Share Plans Across Disciplines

- Planning activities in one area that impact another area will be identified by PCT and EPC. In addition, a library of plans will be made available to the campus community.

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\* Members of the Planning Coordination Team are the Chief Planning, Budgeting, Assessment, Enrollment Management, and Faculty Quality Officers/Representatives. Linkage to the SACS Self-Study process is ensured, since three of the PCT members sit on the SACS Steering Committee.

**Attachment III**

## **STATUS REPORT - SPRING 1998**

### **PROGRESS ON THE STATE AUDITOR'S PLANNING RECOMENDATIONS**

In Fall 1996, the State Auditor's Office conducted a management audit of SWT's administrative functions. As a result, they made three recommendations regarding the planning process. The State Auditor's recommendations and administration's response are included here.

**Auditor's Recommendation: Improve the quality and consistency of strategic plans at the University.**

Administration's Response: SWT's Planning Guide contains information on the elements to be included in each strategic plan. Two templates, one narrative and one spreadsheet format, were offered to the community for use. Both templates required the same planning elements. Many retreats were conducted

by the Chief Planning Officer and members of the Planning Coordination Team and the SWTQuality Team to improve the processes used on campus to develop plans. The automated plan monitoring system to be initiated in Summer 1998, will result in further consistency as strategies and outcome measures are entered into a common format.

**Auditor's Recommendation: Improve efforts to measure progress against strategies, goals and objectives.**

Administration's Response: Outcome targets are included in the institutional plan and responsibility has been assigned for collecting the data to track progress on these outcome targets. Directions in the Planning Guide required outcome measures for strategies at all levels. The automated plan monitoring system, when in place, will result in measurable outcomes that can be tracked annually by Executive Planning Council.

**Auditor's Recommendation: Institute a University-wide quality planning and assessment process.**

Administration's Response: The automated plan monitoring system will facilitate the linkage between planned strategies and actual events. The presence of the Chief Quality, Planning and Assessment Officers on the Planning Coordination Team assures that planning and assessment will be conducted in a quality fashion.