

FY 2008 – FY 2009 UNIT PLANNING SUPPORT MATERIALS

There are a number of resources available to assist units in their planning efforts. Included in this packet are:

- Basic Elements of Unit Planning
- Planning Timetable
- Planning Assumptions
- Description of Unit Planning Process Form
- Instructions for Completing the Planning Initiatives Spreadsheet
- Planning Initiatives Spreadsheet
- University of Houston System Strategic Principles and Initiatives, FY 2007
- Priority Listing of HEAF initiatives submitted for FY 2007
- Priority Listing of Operating Fund Initiatives submitted for FY 2007

Revenue estimates for the 2008-2009 biennium will be distributed later in the year. Updated performance measure reports will also be distributed as they become available.

UNIT PROFILE DATA

The Office of Institutional Research publishes a set of Academic Unit Profiles each year to assist departments in their planning efforts. The Budget Office a companion set of Administrative Profiles.

ONLINE SUPPORT MATERIALS

The UHD Fact Book is another important planning resource. It, along with other sources of institutional data, is available at the web site of the Office of Institutional Research and Planning: <http://www.uhd.edu/about/irp>

UHD's Academic Assessment website (<http://www.uhd.edu/academic/affairs/>) lists all department assessment reports and institutional performance measures. There are also links on this site to a number of external assessment resources.

UHD's SACS website (<http://www.sacs.uhd.edu/>) also contains links to a number of useful planning resources including the compliance report documents that were submitted to SACS during last year's accreditation review.

Basic Elements of Unit Planning

- **Unit planning is an open process:** Effective planning requires an on-going dialogue between units and their supervisors. The planning calendar spells out the type of consultation that should be taking place at the different stages in the planning process. The calendar has been designed to allow time for this required consultation to take place.
- **Planning goals should be measurable:** Planning guidelines ask units to state what they are trying to accomplish and to describe how they will determine if progress is being made. The most meaningful goals are those that are defined in terms of desired outputs and outcomes, not simply in actions taken.
- **Plans should identify total project costs:** All units should discuss with Information Technology and Facilities Management the implementation and support implications of their proposed projects. Unit plans should identify the total costs to the university of their proposed projects and how those costs will be met.
- **Unit plans should examine policy and organizational issues:** Concerns continue to be voiced that unit planning is more of a process in which units compete with one another for new dollars than a genuine planning process. At every level of the planning process, the basic questions asked should be: 1) how effective has the unit been in reaching its goals in the past, and 2) what can we do to improve its effectiveness. Plans at all levels should be analyze ways in which changes in organization, process and policy might improve performance.
- **Unit planning priorities should be highlighted in an executive summary:** The planning guidelines call for a narrative account of what the unit hopes to accomplish in FY2008. This summary should be concise (no more than two pages) but should identify in specific language what the unit wants to accomplish and the basic strategies it proposes using to accomplish its goals.
- **Unit planning should analyze the best use of all possible resources:** There are other possible sources for funding initiatives than through a hoped for increase in state appropriations. Plans should examine the possibility of meeting needs through gifts, state and federal grants, local fees, or the reallocation of existing funds. Unit plans should provide a single comprehensive list of all planning priorities even though various priorities might end up receiving funding support from different sources.
- **Unit plans should list only the planning initiatives of that unit:** The planning focus at the unit level should be on initiatives that will be undertaken by that unit or by that unit in collaboration with others. Collaborative initiatives should indicate all the partners in the collaboration and each partner should list the collaborative initiative in its list of ranked planning initiatives.

Timetable for FY 2008 – FY 2009 Unit Planning Process

The following guidelines were written for the units in Academic Affairs. The other vice presidents will establish planning deadlines for the units reporting to them. All Vice Presidential Area Plans are to be submitted to the University Planning Council in draft form by March 16 and in final form by April 11.

- November 3:** The UPC distributes a set of Planning Guidelines along other support materials that it has developed in consultation with the president to all university planning units.
- December 1:** The draft unit plan is submitted to the unit's dean. After reviewing the unit's preliminary plans, the dean meets with the chairs to discuss their plans and to make any needed changes in them. The meeting between the dean and the chairs takes place before **December 15**.
- January 17:** The dean prepares a preliminary draft plan for the college/division and sends it to the component units of the college/division for review and comment, and to the VPAA for preliminary review. After this review takes place, the dean meets with the college or division to discuss the college/division plan and to consider proposed modifications to it. This meeting takes place before **January 31**.
- February 6:** The dean submits an updated draft of the college/division plan to the Vice President for Academic Affairs with copies to the component units of the college/division. After the Vice President reviews each plan, meetings are held with the deans to discuss the college/division plans and how to make any necessary changes in them. The meetings between the vice president and the deans take place by **February 28**.
- March 16:** A draft vice presidential (area) plan is completed and sent back to the colleges and divisions for review and comment. It is also sent to the UPC for preliminary review. After the colleges and divisions review the area plan, the VPs meet with their direct reports to discuss the plan and to consider proposed modifications to it. These meetings should take place before **March 28**.
- April 11:** The vice presidents submit updated drafts of their area plans to the UPC with copies to their component units. Planning initiatives proposed by the Faculty Senate, Staff Council and Student Government Association are also turned into the UPC by this date.
- April 26:** The UPC holds an open forum to review its preliminary ranking of the planning priorities that have come to it through the area plans.
- May 4:** The UPC submits its draft planning recommendations to the president.

Planning Assumptions for FY 2008 and FY 2009

Assumptions pertaining to educational mission:

- UHD is a public university created to assist the State of Texas in accomplishing its educational goals and objectives.
- UHD's educational purpose is set forth in its Board-approved mission statement of providing quality programs for students from many different backgrounds.
- As a component of the University of Houston System, UHD offers academic programs and works in collaboration with other system components to deliver programs through teaching centers and distance learning technologies.
- UHD is a commuter university.
- UHD is primarily an undergraduate university with a limited number of master's programs.

Assumptions pertaining to students:

- The local pool of traditional college age cohorts will increase with the greatest growth coming in the Hispanic and Asian communities.
- The majority of those in this traditional college-age cohort will begin their education at a community college.
- The demand for baccalaureate-level education from community college transfer students as well as from older, returning and other non-traditional students will increase.
- Despite recent reforms in public education, many students graduating from area high schools will continue to lack the skills and information needed for success in college-level courses.
- The number of students needing financial assistance will increase, but most of the aid available will be in the form of guaranteed loans.
- Students will be both cost and quality conscious in choosing an institution of higher education.
- The local economy will shape much of the local demand for higher education.
- There will be an increasing demand for asynchronous learning and other modes of instruction that will permit students to learn at a time and place of their choosing.

Assumptions pertaining to infrastructure and fiscal resources:

- Additional funding will be needed to maintain university operations at their current level.
- Enrollment growth, increases in fees, and reallocations will be the primary means of funding both the increased costs of current operations as well as new initiatives.
- The university's need for private gifts and grants will increase, but the increased competition for gift and grant funding will make these sources of funding more problematic.
- Performance data will become an increasingly important factor in the allocation of funds within the state and within the system.
- The university will continue to have a significant space deficit.

Assumptions pertaining to human resources:

- Regulatory compliance, new technologies, and the upgrading of existing technologies will require additional employees and new skill sets.
- Off-campus sites and an increased reliance on computer technologies will continue to create new workload issues for both faculty and staff.
- The development of online courses and the integration of web-based technologies into face-to-face and ITV courses will have significant staffing implications.
- UHD will continue to face a difficult challenge in recruiting and retaining the quality faculty and staff needed to maintain a high level of excellence.

Description of Unit Planning Process

Plan for: _____

College/Division _____

I. Briefly describe the process used in developing this unit plan.

II. If the process included a department planning committee, list the membership of that committee and describe how members were selected. If the process did not include a planning committee, identify those who had primary responsibility for putting together the draft plan and how that responsibility was assigned.

III. Was the draft plan distributed to all members of the unit before it was submitted for higher administrative review? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, were all members given the opportunity to comment on the plan before it went forward? _____ Yes _____ No

Name of Unit Manager

Date

Instructions for Developing the Unit Plan

UHD's unit planning system is based on a planning and evaluation model developed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) to assist universities in improving their institutional effectiveness. SACS expects each university to engage in an "ongoing quest for quality" through a planning and evaluation process that is "systematic, broad-based, interrelated and appropriate" to its mission. Unit planning begins with a careful review and analysis of all available performance measures so that planning decisions are as data driven as possible. In developing their plans, units should look at all aspects of their operations, not just those with funding implications. All significant actions (changes in policy and procedures, organizational changes, etc.) that the unit is contemplating taking during the next two years should be included in the unit plan for review by the unit supervisors.

The format for the unit plan has been simplified this year over what it has been in the past. There are now only three components to the unit plan: 1) a description of the planning process that was used, 2) a summary listing of all of the unit's proposed planning initiatives, and 3) a brief executive summary that relates the specific initiatives being proposed to the broader goals and concerns of the unit.

Unit planning initiatives are to be listed on the attached spreadsheet. Because the plan is a two year plan, there are two forms to complete – one for FY2008 and one for FY2009. If they wish, units may submit a revised list of initiatives for FY2009 prior to the development of the FY 2009 budget. Spending initiatives should be listed either in the HEAF or in the Operating Funds section of the form. Funding initiatives for new technology and other physical assets should be listed in the HEAF section while all other funding initiatives will be listed under Operating Funds. Planning initiatives that will not require new money should be listed in the "Other Initiatives Involving Changes in Process, Structure, or Policy: section.

The purpose of the brief executive summary (no more than two pages) that is to be submitted with the spreadsheet is to provide reviewers with some additional context for evaluating the unit's planning initiatives. This summary should identify what the unit sees as its greatest strengths and weaknesses and indicate how the initiatives being proposed will improve the unit's overall effectiveness and help it achieve any significant new goals it has set for itself. Units may use this narrative section of their plan to highlight whatever additional information they believe should be considered as their specific proposals are reviewed by others.

Spreadsheet Details

- 1) This spreadsheet is set to landscape mode and on legal size paper. You cannot expand the spreadsheet horizontally or it will not print on one legal sheet of paper. Cells will expand vertically as you type in your text. The font size is preset at 10 point Ariel Narrow and should not be changed.
- 2) There is a limit of 1024 characters per cell in all excel files. If you need to write more than the maximum characters allowed, you can add another line of cells by right-clicking on the number margin on the far left of the worksheet, and selecting "insert". You may also submit additional information explaining the need for the initiative as an appendix to your plan.
- 3) This worksheet can be expanded to add more lines for additional initiatives. To add another line, right-click on the number margin on the far left of the worksheet and select "insert"; another line will appear above the current number.

- 4) If you have questions about the form and need assistance in completing it, contact Lucy Bowen at extension 8024.

Column Contents

Column 1: Rank

Indicate the numerical ranking (1, 2, 3, . . .) of each initiative in this column. HEAF, Operating Fund, and Other Initiatives should all be ranked separately in their respective sections. .

Column 2: Name of Initiative

Provide a brief descriptive title of the planning initiative.

Column 3: Assessment-Based Need for Initiative

In this column provide a fuller description of exactly what is being requested and why it is being requested. This description should include references to any assessments that support the need for the initiative as well as an explicit statement of the goal or objective the initiative is designed to address.

Column 4: Estimated Cost

Show the estimated cost of the initiative and describe how the estimate was made.

Column 5: Collaborative Initiative

Because many aspects of university operations do not fall under the clear jurisdiction of any one particular unit (e.g., classroom furniture and equipment), units are urged to plan collaborative initiatives to address concerns that transcend unit boundaries. Collaborative initiatives should indicate all the partners in the collaboration and each partner should list the collaborative initiative in its list of ranked planning initiatives.

Column 6: Impact on Performance Measures

Identify which, if any, of the institution's basic performance/accountability measures are most likely to be affected by the successful implementation of the initiative. Use this column to describe any measurable benefit the initiative is designed to bring to the University.

Column 7: Support of Goals

Indicate those goals – department, college, university, system or state – that the initiative most directly supports.

Column 8: Technology Support Requirements

If the initiative has technological dimensions, there must be a similar consultation with Information Technology staff regarding the exact type of technological support that will be required before the initiative goes forward for vice-presidential review.

Column 9: Space Requirements

If there are space requirements, there must be consultation with the Facilities Management staff before the initiative is forwarded on for vice-presidential review. If the initiative includes space requirements, a description of how they are to be met should be included here.