STANDARD TWO—PLANNING AND EVALUATION

DESCRIPTION

In the last ten years, an increased focus on planning and evaluation has evolved as the University developed an active strategic planning process, implemented the *Academic Quality Assessment and Development* (AQAD) academic review process, and worked with Faculty Senate Committees focused on General Education. Planning and evaluation activities are now embedded in a systematic, broad-based, and integrated manner through the Strategic Plan and the Facilities Master Plan, the financial planning process, and the periodic and regular review of academic programs. Faculty, staff, and administration work collaboratively to assess the achievement of institutional objectives, plan for their improvement, and allocate resources in a targeted manner.

Planning

Since the 2000 self-study, through strengthened efforts in both short- and long-term institutional and strategic planning, UMass Dartmouth developed a Strategic Plan with specific goals for increasing enrollment, strengthening graduate education, and expanding faculty scholarship and institutional outreach. Building on principles expressed in the earlier plan, the current Mission and Vision statements were formally adopted through the Faculty Senate. These principles set targets for enrollment management that have (with periodic updating) continued to direct enrollment planning. In 2006-07, the Chancellor and Provost led an initiative to update the Strategic Plan. In a process similar to that used in 2000, broad -based participation was achieved through stakeholder SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) teams, which subsequently developed focused plan elements in a three-day retreat of administrators, faculty, and students. The final plan retained the emphases and the main categories of the earlier version and outlined specific activities needed to achieve the goal of expanding doctoral education to achieve Carnegie Doctoral/Research University status.

In response to UMass Dartmouth's 2003 NEASC focused visit, a Facilities Master Plan was developed and implemented with the assistance of an external consulting firm and was accepted by CIHE as part of the University's 2005 mid-cycle report. Since the plan's development, heightened emphasis has been placed on sustainability. The Office of Facilities Planning, Design and Construction (FPDC), established in 2006, is responsible for implementing the critical goals outlined in the Master Plan and developing the specific design and engineering reports necessary to bring projects to completion.

Financial planning over the past several years has used a comprehensive budget planning model. A budget calendar structures the annual budget development process, and both short- and longer-range budget planning assumptions are constructed, based on revenue estimates from several streams of funding. Representation of the various programs in the budget formation process is accomplished through the deans and vice chancellors.

UMass Dartmouth's institutional planning relates to UMass system-level priorities through formal and dynamic processes. UMass trustees have adopted Strategic Priorities for the five-campus UMass system. Annual reports including the Performance Indicators report to the Board reflect both progress in achieving the system's Strategic Priorities as well as specific campus goals. Periodic reviews, such as the Chancellor's five-year performance review (last conducted in AY 2004-2005) and specific reports made at Board of Trustee meetings by the Chancellors,

maintain the relationship between the university system's priorities and those of the individual institutions. The website of the UMass President's Office offers a variety of summative reports, most derived from campus reports, which provide external accountability but also permit campuses to evaluate their progress.

Evaluation

The University evaluates the achievement of its Mission and purposes in several ways. The 2007 update to the Strategic Plan provides a framework of implementation strategies and objectives, identifies the individual(s) responsible to coordinate efforts and monitor progress, and sets benchmarks for outcomes. Information provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) is supplemented by data gathered in the functional areas themselves.

There are three main tools for periodic review of academic programs: AQAD, external accreditation reviews, and annual program reviews. Academic Quality Assessment and Development (AQAD), an academic program review mandated by the UMass Board of Trustees and implemented separately on each UMass campus, operates on a seven-year cycle to ascertain program quality and effectiveness and identify strategies for improvement. Reviews by external accrediting agencies fulfill the requirements of AQAD reviews. These include a self-study, an external review, and a final action plan. The campus has now completed two full cycles of AQAD program reviews. Annual program reviews are accomplished through the departmental assessment reports.

In addition to its academic degree programs, UMass Dartmouth currently has fifteen Centers that vary in focus, size, and mission. In 1996 the UMass System implemented a policy for the review of centers and institutes. UMass Dartmouth follows the policy as outlined in an expanded institutional version. On a five-year cycle, a committee of internal stakeholders and faculty selected by the Faculty Senate is formed to conduct a self-study focusing on mission and accomplishment of purposes, involvement of students, space, and budget. The review report ends with a recommendation to continue the center with or without modifications or to terminate it; the recommendation goes for action to the Provost, then the Chancellor, and finally the UMass System President.

UMass Dartmouth has strengthened its assessment of student achievement in several areas. CIHE's response to the institution's 2007 institutional report requested "that the self-study prepared in advance of the Spring 2010 evaluation give particular emphasis to the University's success in . . . revising the general education program and in establishing appropriate learning outcomes and assessments for the program." Guided by this directive, during Fall 2007, the General Education Committee worked with the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies (now Assistant Chancellor of Institutional Research and Assessment) to determine learning outcomes. In December 2007, the Faculty Senate approved a comprehensive statement of learning outcomes, thus establishing a much-needed foundation for additional progress. The Task Group on Student Learning Assessment for General Education was then formed, and the Faculty Senate formally adopted the Task Group's recommended process for assessment of the general education outcomes in May 2008; the assessment process is now being implemented.

The University also evaluates student achievement and success in the attainment of high-level learning outcomes. According to Standard 4.15, general education "embodies the institution's

definition of an educated person and prepares students for the world in which they will live." Seeking to generalize this idea to co-curricular as well as academic learning and to learning in majors as well as general education, the Provost and the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs formed the Integrated Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO) Task Group, a committee of faculty, staff, and students, which worked through the Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 semesters to conduct a broad, campus-wide discussion. The result is a statement of Integrated Student Learning Outcomes representing the UMass Dartmouth ideal of an educated person. The Student and Faculty Senates endorsed this statement for implementation in April 2009.

The University also recognizes the role of student input into the evaluation of academic programs. CIHE's response to the 2007 institutional report requested "that the self-study prepared in advance of the Spring 2010 evaluation give particular emphasis to the University's success in . . . implementing the student course evaluation system across the institution and using data to strengthen general education and departmental academic programs." Accordingly, the administration has been working with the Faculty Federation to address this concern, since student evaluation of courses is encompassed in the collective bargaining agreement. As a result of the most recent contract negotiations, an agreement including a common course evaluation form was ratified by the faculty in February 2010.

Since the 2007 institutional report to CIHE, additional progress has been achieved on learning outcomes and assessment methodologies. Annual surveys are administered to ascertain student satisfaction with services, and educational and co-curricular experiences; undergraduate and graduate degree recipients complete an exit survey; and graduating students are surveyed on their plans for careers or further education. Results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) are regularly evaluated by campus leaders to identify areas for potential improvement and to address specific issues. In Spring 2009, for example, the results were used to frame a faculty discussion of the time and effort students give to academic work outside of class. Data collected as part of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) have been summarized and reported to a number of planning groups, including both the Task Group on Assessment of General Education and a committee developing plans for a more structured first-year experience.

To further address planning and evaluation at functional levels, the work of administrative staff has been refocused and new hires have been made. For example, Institutional Research and Assessment now reports to the Chancellor, enrollment management is overseen by an Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs functions were integrated within Academic Affairs, and Associate Provosts for both Undergraduate and Graduate Studies were appointed. In addition, working committees have been formed to address specific issues. For example, the Senior Enrollment Management Team, chaired by the Provost, oversees broad enrollment planning, goal-formulation, and monitoring, while the Enrollment Management Committee, composed of students, faculty, and directors from Academic, Student, and Fiscal Affairs, provides support for the coordination and implementation of enrollment management strategies.

The OIRA supports planning and evaluation and maintains a repository of historic data. Reports published on a regular cycle include AQAD data books (department-level information for use in academic program reviews), trend reports, enrollment projection tools, key fact sheets, and the Common Data Set. The office also provides peer comparison tools such as the IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) and the Delaware Study of faculty workloads and

develops and maintains tools for enrollment management planning. In 2005 the University's Enterprise Resource Planning system was upgraded to PeopleSoft in a system-wide implementation, administered centrally by University Information Technology Services (UITS). UITS is also sponsoring an initiative, the Business Intelligence Program, to provide evaluation tools for management decisions.

APPRAISAL

Planning
The comprehensive update of the 2007 Strategic Plan update produced a matrix of implementation strategies that lists objectives for each functional area, names an individual or unit responsible to coordinate efforts and monitor progress, and specifies the measurable outcomes as well as means of gauging their accomplishment. While the timeline for some objectives may need to be delayed due to fiscal constraints, the Strategic Plan continues to frame decision-making and guide priority action. Communication and dissemination of the plan is broadly based. The Chancellor's web page, in addition to the reports on the Strategic Plan, lists accomplishments and specific goals for the next four-year period (2008-2012) in detail. The report was shared with a number of external constituencies. The Provost also reports annually to the Faculty Senate on updates to the plan.

After extensive campus discussion, the institutional Mission and Vision and resultant planning priorities have been broadly accepted. These priorities set goals to achieve an enrollment of 2,000 graduate students and 8,000 FTE undergraduate students; to graduate sufficient doctoral students to achieve Carnegie Doctoral/Research University status; and to grow in research and scholarship, while maintaining institutional commitment to undergraduate education and community engagement. These goals guide decision-making and allocation of resources. Despite current budgetary constraints, the Chancellor consistently emphasizes that the institution's core strengths will keep it moving toward the objectives presented in the 2007 updated Strategic Plan.

As the planning efforts move forward, there is a need for better communication of priorities. For example, while the objective of changing the ratio of undergraduate to graduate enrollment is clear, the timeline has not been as clearly defined by the Enrollment Management Task Force. With the new emphasis on increasing doctoral education, there is also a need to establish clear programmatic enrollment goals to guide both the volume and types of scholarly activity. The progress, benchmarks and timelines established for other key institutional activities, such as those related to service, economic development, and fund-raising continue to be monitored.

The 2005 Facilities Master Plan reflects strategic planning goals for enrollment, research, and evolution as a residential campus with a unique cultural identity and sense of community. The plan addresses both short-term and long-term needs through key strategies, and it addresses such factors as life-span limitations of building systems, expansion of student residences, the increasing need for specialized laboratories for research, and the challenges of inflexible but historically important campus architecture. While much progress has been achieved, adjustments are needed to better encompass other instructional locations), to respond to shifts in state capital funding priorities, and to incorporate new emphases on sustainability. While the plan outlines ways to address the issues of expanded enrollments and research agendas, the need for flexible classroom space, teaching labs, and advanced research space, the University has been challenged in implementing the recommendations. There are only six classrooms with seating capacity of

60-100, for example, and facilities for large lectures are limited. Before major renovations can move forward, however, additional data on curriculum requirements and laboratory and classroom capacity/usage are needed. The latter data were gathered in a study completed in Fall 2009 and will help inform allocation of resources around teaching and research lab facilities needs.

The budget planning process includes all key parties and is aligned with the campus' Strategic Plan. Vice Chancellors and deans represent their programs and areas as part of the process. Campus awareness and input are provided through periodic all-campus town meetings, communications from the Chancellor, and monthly meetings with the Budget Review Board, made up of representatives from each of the major unions on campus as well as management representatives. Despite these opportunities for input, it appears that there is a need to broadenofficial communication channels to reach all members of the campus community. A full web-site with campus access is being developed.

UMass system-level priorities both shape and are shaped by each campus in the system. UMass-wide resources are well-developed and accessible. Policies, numerous reports, including system-wide Fact Sheets, Student Profiles, and Performance Measurement Reports are available on the website. Other reports provide analysis and summary data on research and development expenditures, student financial aid, and campus libraries. The Performance Measurement System (PMS) is a standardized annual performance assessment and peer comparison that provides the opportunity for each UMass campus to evaluate its performance on five key indicators: academic quality, access and affordability, student success and satisfaction, service to the commonwealth, and financial health. Starting in 2010, the UMass System will expand the PMS to include student learning outcomes, and information about students' experiences beyond the classroom, their career choices, and their community engagement activities. Complementing PMS, UMass campuses will also participate in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA), which UMass Dartmouth implemented in August 2009.

Evaluation
The Strategic Plan includes goals and objectives to improve institutional evaluation. However, given that institutional change continues to occur in a rapidly evolving context, it is once again time to update the Strategic Plan. Some assumptions—concerning appropriations from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, tolerance for increasing student fees, and the specific balance between undergraduate and graduate enrollment growth—may need to be reassessed. At the same time, initiatives such as internationalization of the student body and the resource implications of development of doctoral education may require additional discussion and definition. There is also a need to carefully consider whether the Vision Statement translates the core purposes expressed in the Mission into the emphases on research and scholarship, doctoral education, international/global dimensions, and core aims such as innovation that must receive more attention in this next five year period.

The periodic review of programs has become increasingly effective in the past decade. AQAD reviews for departments lacking external accreditation have helped strategic planning to reach down to the departmental level. AQAD Action Plans guide decisions about departmental budgets and hiring, and some recent AQAD reviews have guided decisions about readiness to initiate changes in curriculum and departmental structure. The approval process for new degree programs (under which five degree programs were added in the past two years) requires that

proposals document their alignment to the Mission and the Strategic Plan and show evidence of sufficient resources in terms of faculty, equipment, library holdings and services, and scholarship.

Although comprehensive, AQAD is not an integrated, on-going process for departmental improvement but seems to function more as a snapshot at a particular point in time. Program review needs a stronger basis in annual reporting. All departments and colleges, including those that are covered by external accreditation, would benefit by implementation of a reporting process that requires systematic consideration of enrollment targets and research goals, ensures currency of student learning outcomes, assesses students' learning, and uses the results for improvement.

The review policy for University Centers is not responsive to differences in type or size, nor is it designed to obtain a fully independent critique. The reviews lack input from national experts and comparative data from other similar organizations; and the process treats centers as if they were autonomous entities rather than stressing their important connection to institutional purposes within a structure of governance. Moreover, the 5-year cycle may not provide the right time frame to ensure a fully substantive review, similar to the AQAD, on a 7-10 year cycle.

The Task Group on Assessment of General Education developed a process for assessing learning outcomes, a significant achievement. It consulted stakeholders, updated previous efforts to pilot assessment, utilized external perspectives gained from attendance at an AAC&U conference and reviewed NEASC standards and issues for external accountability. Following a Task Group recommendation, the Provost appointed a Director of General Education. UMass Dartmouth has progressed from discussing and piloting general education assessment to approving policies and implementing the process. The General Education Committee actively manages the new assessment program, under leadership from the Director, oversight of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies and support from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. A new campus dialogue on the general education program's design and structure is occurring in Spring 2010 in parallel with and informed by general education assessment results.

The adoption of the ISLO statement provides an important tool for evaluation of student attainment of higher order intellectual, professional and personal skills. The ISLO statement provides direction for defining student learning outcomes and a set of broad principles for assessing their achievement. It will be important to determine how to introduce the ISLO statement to students at orientation, use it as a touchstone as they progress, and provide the opportunity for reflection in the senior capstone experiences.

UMass Dartmouth continues to make progress in sustaining learning outcomes and assessment methodologies for all academic programs and majors. Programs that have external accreditation have benefited by their accrediting organizations' emphasis on monitoring student success. Learning outcomes for undergraduate programs continue to be published in the catalog. Departments' Series E responses (See Appendices,) indicate that, in almost all programs, outcomes have been determined and published, and their assessment is in place, but with varying degrees of thoroughness. Nevertheless, a growing number of departments have gone through one or more assessment cycles and used results for improvement.

Student evaluation of classroom teaching has been improved by having students evaluate faculty in all courses in both semesters as well as in summer, intersession and online sessions. As a

result of recent contract negotiations, a course evaluation form, which includes common questions, will be applied in all classes in Fall 2010.

UMass Dartmouth now routinely uses expanded tools and resources for assessment and evaluation, including surveys, benchmarking, and use of indicators for monitoring progress. Results from such processes are considered in decision-making processes.

Campus administrative reorganizations have enhanced leadership for planning and evaluation and reallocated resources needed to realize the major goals of the Strategic Plan. Emphasis on enrollment management and retention has expanded and enhanced involvement of the colleges through the associate deans. New leadership in key areas combined with new planning and evaluation processes and structures is helping to develop an assessment- and data-based approach to managing the institution. OIRA has enhanced efforts to provide data for institutional management and decision-making, and especially supports the development of assessment efforts at all levels of the institution. The Associate Provost for Graduate Studies is responsible for development, growth and assessment of graduate programs. The Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies is concentrating on undergraduate areas of strategic importance. The recent integration of Student Affairs with Academic Affairs has enhanced opportunities for planning comprehensive curricular and co-curricular/support programs. Significant improvements have already been introduced in Orientation activities and First Year Experience planning.

The establishment of the Senior Enrollment Management Team has raised enrollment planning, goal-formulation, and monitoring of progress to the level of institutional decision-making. The new working committee for assistant/associate deans and more frequent meetings of the Graduate Council are filling in gaps between administrative and faculty/department activities. More data are available to help colleges and departments manage instructional resources; these include a daily update on course enrollment and registration totals provided by the Registrar's Office and enrollment management reports from OIRA. The Chancellor and the leadership team have access to tools necessary to monitor progress and to respond to changing fiscal contexts.

Although the new UMass-wide PeopleSoft system offers improved access to a wider variety of information, there have been issues with integration of data across the student, financial, and human resources modules, especially for reporting purposes. Implementation of a data mart or warehouse structure for reporting and developing higher-level summary and status reports remains well in the future. The five-campus project in Business Intelligence has implemented only the finance academic administrator dashboard, and only in a preliminary version. Developing systems to review or inventory achievements in a range of important areas of institutional activity are challenging.

UMass Dartmouth makes effective use of external perspectives in planning and evaluation. For example, a report by the Yardley Research Group based on work completed in 2005-06 continues to impact graduate education planning. The Yardley Report presented a systematic comparison of each graduate program against peer and aspirational institutions. Reviews of graduate programs in the College of Visual and Performing Arts (2008), the effectiveness of library services, and both campus and UMass IT also utilized external reviewers. A task force that included UMass Dartmouth faculty and staff, as well as representatives of area schools and government officials, was important in the recent reorganization of education- and policy-related

academic programs into the School of Education, Public Policy, and Civic Engagement.

Coordination of efforts in the critical areas of enrollment management and retention by the Registrar, Admissions, college deans, and academic departments has improved the University's enrollment planning. As data-driven decision-making evolves, OIRA has supported the collection of data, its analysis and consolidation, and its dissemination. Areas to be improved include: a standard report format for department/unit profile data and planning targets and indicators to assess program and department goals; high-level review of campus data and assessment needs; a comprehensive grants and scholarship activity report; improved analysis of data, including data-mining, trends analysis, and projections; improved internet availability of data and "Business Intelligence" tools such as dashboards, key performance indicators, and date-to-date status monitoring.

PROJECTIONS

Building on the substantial progress of the past five years in planning and evaluation efforts, UMass Dartmouth projects greater effectiveness in several key areas: academic and co-curricular assessment, facilities planning, and perhaps most importantly, in improving the institution's capacity for planning and evaluation.

Assessment of Academic and Co-curricular Activities: Assessment activities will be strengthened with regard to student evaluation of faculty, academic programs and co-curricular activities, and University Centers. These initiatives will be led variously by the Assistant Chancellor for Research and Assessment, the Associate Provosts of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, and the Deans. Other groups will be included in collaboration as appropriate.

Schedule and Activities:
- In AY 2010-11, the Student Evaluation of Classroom Teaching adopted with the ratification of the Faculty Federation Agreement in February 2010 will be implemented across the institution.
- In AY 2010-11, the Integrated Student Learning Outcomes task group will draft a framework of academic and co-curricular program outcomes
- In AY 2011-12, ISLO outcomes will be mapped to the assessment of General Education outcomes.
- In AY 2012-13, departmental assessment plans will be updated to reflect evaluation of ISLO/General Education Outcomes.
- In AY 2013-14, co-curricular programs will update their assessment plans to reflect integration of ISLO outcomes.
- In AY 2013-14, a task force led by the deans will review the policy for the evaluation of University Centers and Projects for the effectiveness of current practices and make recommendations for improvements.
- In AY 2014-15, a working group of Center Directors will conduct pilot assessments of three Centers using one or more review models. The results of the assessments and an evaluation of the assessment methods will be submitted to the Council of Deans by Spring 2015.

Facilities Planning: Facilities planning activities will address both short term and long term needs through revised processes flowing from the Facilities Master Plan and reorganization of the Facilities Department (see Standard Eight). The Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance will lead this initiative in collaboration with the Facilities Planning, Design and Construction Office.

Schedule and Activities:
- In AY 2009-10, as part of its short term planning, the Facilities Planning, Design and Construction (FPDC) Office will complete the comprehensive evaluation of classroom and laboratory utilization, reviewing both instructional and research labs.
- In AY 2010-11, a plan for renovation of laboratory and classroom spaces, based on the study above, will be developed.
- In AY 2010-11, Administration and Finance and the FPDC Office will implement a process for periodic facilities review and systematic prioritization of budget allocations.
- In AY 2009-10 and beyond, the Facilities Master Plan will direct long term planning of major projects such as the Library renovation, the Charlton College of Business addition and the expansion of the School for Marine Science and Technology.

Capacity for Planning and Evaluation: To strengthen the institution's ability to conduct evaluation activities, better communication processes and improved data management tools will be adopted. The Assistant Chancellor for Institutional Research and Assessment will lead this initiative in collaboration with a working group comprised of each College's designated assessment liaison (generally, an associate/assistant dean).

Schedule and Activities:
- In AY 2010-11, the working group will be charged to identify support needed for annual data and activity reporting; OIRA will develop templates for data reports and activity inventories.
- In AY 2010-11, a pilot implementation of the UMass system's data warehouse program will be undertaken.
- In AY 2011-12, a quarterly e-communication on assessment activities and resources will be developed in conjunction with a redesigned website.
- In AY 2011-12, the working group and OIRA staff will work with departments to improve assessment activities through better organization of resources.

Institutional Effectiveness

UMass Dartmouth has implemented mission-driven planning and evaluation processes. In place are a facilities master plan, strategic plan with a detailed implementation, enrollment planning, budget planning, and plans for a growing list of units and programs. Evaluation processes are on-going in program and service areas across the University, including both program review and learning outcomes assessment in the academic programs. Importantly, evaluation results are being used to inform decisions about resources and constructive change. Planning and evaluation will continue to improve as the institution concentrates on updating planning documents and implementation strategies, and enhancing the use of evidence (both internal data and external perspectives) in decision making.