

MISSION/VISION/CORE VALUES COMMENTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE/DEANS COUNCIL

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General comment #1: The initial discussion should serve to crystallize broad, thematic emphases and strategic directions. Whatever we come out with should include a commitment to diversity, globalization, and sustainability; an emphasis on the university's critical roles in regional and statewide workforce development, economic development, and cultural outreach; and a desire to nurture a campus climate that embraces diversity, values new faculty and staff members and supports their retention and development, and encourages student engagement and leadership development.

General comment #2: The strategic planning process must provide the means to answer this vital question: "Who should FSU educate?" We have avoided making that decision for over 25 years, trying instead to be a school for honors students, students with potential, AND students who cannot get into another institution. If we do not decide what our market is so that resources can be allotted accordingly, the whole planning process will be a waste of time and effort.

A. MISSION

1. This [the current mission statement] is not a mission statement. A mission statement is short, succinct, and unambiguous. It states clearly what the University sees as its core mission; its reason for existence.
2. It seems to me that the one attribute that is distinctive is that we are "closely woven into the fabric of the surrounding area." These are our own words. There are thousands of institutions that aren't research institutions. Most institutions claim to be culturally diverse or are silent on the fact that they aren't. Rigorous general education requirements are common as is learning outside of the classroom. So, much of what we say could be "insert name" of university.
3. The mission statement is comprehensive but also quite long. Should mission refer back to our roots as a teaching institution or should it be present and future focused? "The University is distinguished by a scenic campus encircled by mountains"—is this statement part of mission or just descriptive? Should a mission statement present a historical context and a description of setting or should this be someplace else? With regard to faculty qualifications and what students learn and how they will be engaged, how do we decide these things are really occurring? What comes first, our view that we are all of these things or is this a university that prides itself on metrics and accountability to determine whether what we say is really occurring? To go back to the mission—we must always be sure the mission is something we truly are and not something we want to believe we are.
4. I just completed the review of the eight-page Mission Statement. I think the committee did an outstanding job when this was done two years ago and I know Catherine certainly added her golden touch to the statement.
 - a. The format, of course, meets the requirements of COMAR. Several of the objectives and outcomes have already been met during the past two years and some are very close to being achieved within this semester. But it is my understanding that we have to live with this mission statement until the Board of Regents asks for a revision. In talking with Rob Smith, he tells me that

everyone of these institutional objectives and outcomes are “measureable,” and therefore, are accountable. So much for the Mission Statement.

5. Dump the word “affordable”; focus on access, e.g., “offering students access to a wide array of programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels.”
6. Dump “scenic campus encircled by mountains.”

B. VISION STATEMENT

1. The Vision Statement looks good.
2. It's O.K. I do think we are trying to cover all the bases and might unintentionally be watering it down. What if we just focused on the first four “boxes” as a reiteration of the vision? I am suggesting that we end up going into too many details when we feel the need to include all three Colleges.
3. I have no significant or philosophical problems with the "Summary Mission Statement" nor our draft "Vision Statement." Your synthesis of all the feedback is extremely good.
4. The following statement should be part of our vision: FSU's diverse programs will contribute to the reputation of Frostburg State University as the premier educational and cultural center for the region and for serving as a catalyst for economic development
5. I recommend change number 4 to read “opportunities for undergraduate research and experiential education”
6. Number 7 might read “environmental and sustainability studies.”
7. Finally I think we need to capture in a thematic statement our strong focus in STEM.
8. The draft of the vision statement is truly too specific. Also, it teeters back and forth between delivery and programs and also with an emphasis on Liberal Arts and General Education being important while trying to be “everything to everybody”. We even received feedback that the music department should be highlighted and the art department as segments of the Liberal Arts. However, what overshadows it all is delivery, emphasis on Liberal Arts because no matter what your academic major these are important, experiential learning, engagement, etc. I think that the more specific and programmatic we try to be there more we end up washing down the overall goal of this vision. Leadership is important but what has been our commitment and focus on leadership?
9. I'm leaving this section mostly to the Deans to identify those programs that are outstanding. However, I would like to note that the library's Information Literacy Program is one of the best organized and effective in the system. It has been the main objective of the library for the past several years.
10. A suggested rewriting of the entire draft vision:
 - a. “Frostburg State University serves Western Maryland as a premier regional comprehensive university that encourages academic excellence and serves the community, region, and state through economic and workforce development, cultural outreach, teacher training, and leadership development.”

- b. A suggested inclusion of specific thematic emphases:
- c. Sustain a rich intellectual community that prepares students to address global issues by promoting education and scholarship within and across disciplinary boundaries.
- d. Serve as a preeminent center for cultural outreach to the region and the state.
- e. Serve as a catalyst for economic and workforce development in the region and the state.
- f. Encourage students' active engagement in their communities and their fields of study.
- g. Provide widespread leadership development opportunities for students.
- h. Serve the region and the state through developing excellence in
 - Arts, humanities, and cultures;
 - Education and human services
 - Business and public affairs
 - Science, technology, and sustainability

C. CORE VALUES

1. Core Values look good; however, I think something should be added regarding our willingness to change as situations warrant whether that change is technological, educational, academic, etc. We desire to be a leader rather than a follower, in all areas.
2. Well, they are hard to disagree with. I am thinking that we continue to say too much. In other words, doesn't' empowering each student for success imply preparing them for life beyond college which implies leadership and technology? I might be over-simplifying this, I know. It's all about measurable outcomes and how we deliver those in clear ways.
3. Perhaps Core Value 2 should be split something like the following:
 - a. We will provide outstanding education with clearly identified standards for learning and assessment
 - b. We will maintain a highly qualified staff(?) of faculty members who are excellent teachers and scholars
4. Core values are ok.
5. I get confused in the first core value. Empowerment is a term we use as well as caring. What are the metrics by which we apply caring? Perhaps the focus is more on empowerment and we need to develop this theme. It is hard to universally measure caring and difficult to assure it is happening. What process will be used to develop these important academic standards? We will provide faculty development to encourage new teaching methodologies and set standards--I assume within an environment that encourages assessment of student learning—is this what we are saying?

6. I would like to see #3 – We will prepare students for the world beyond college -- Information Literacy should remain a key component of this section.
7. When I read #1, I felt two things were missing: 1) encouraging and supporting our students to achieve success as opposed to just empowering them to do so; and 2) providing them a safe environment in which they can be successful. When I then read your definition, you addressed both of those. So I guess my only question is this: does the wording in #1 convey everything you elaborated on in the definition?
8. Our core values should include
 - a. We will be responsive to the needs of the regional, state, national, and global communities.
 - b. We will maintain a campus environment in which students have the opportunity to mature and grow intellectually.
 - c. We will maintain a diverse and inclusive campus in which students have the opportunity to interact with individuals from a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds.
 - d. Students will be encouraged to analyze and address contemporary issues by synthesizing knowledge across disciplinary lines.
 - e. Students will be encouraged to prepare for life beyond college by engaging in experiences that augment classroom learning, such as internships, study abroad, independent research, and volunteerism and civic engagement.
 - f. Frostburg State University will maintain a positive, supportive atmosphere while expecting responsibility and accountability from all members of the university community.

These statements rework most of what was in the original set of draft core values. Concerning the initial draft value #5, using technology to aid instruction is not a core value—it is an instrumentality.

D. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. Raise freshman GPA's and SAT scores. Retain quality students. Work to enhance the University's academic reputation.
2. Several...
 - a. Academic enrichment – faculty salaries and enhanced faculty development, dealing with major faculty turnover, complete integration of technology in the classroom. We have a unique opportunity to truly shape the faculty of tomorrow.
 - b. Student enrichment – scholarship support, an infusion of a leadership and responsible citizenship perspective across curricular and co-curricular programs, improving student health and general well-being.
 - c. Regional and cultural enrichment – strengthening our role as a leader in integrating culture and the arts via traditional performance activity as well as leading in strategic related economic development initiatives.
 - d. All of this geared at proactively defining who we are and what makes us distinctive.

3. Seek resource enhancement from both internal and external sources within a framework of responsible resource management.
 4. Continue to develop and implement unit student recruitment and retention plans.
 5. Develop and implement an assessment program to facilitate an environment of continuing improvement.
 6. Develop new programs to respond to emerging needs and to workforce shortage areas in Maryland.
 7. Facilitate efforts to enhance regional engagement.
 8. Link unit strategic planning and program review process to resource allocation.
 9. Three recommendations:
 - a. FSU will be a university that sets strategic directions that lead to resource allocation decisions that will be based upon data and the premise that student success is a priority.
 - b. FSU will focus development of new programs on those that support the economic development of this region.
 - c. As faculty retire, FSU will focus upon the importance of recruiting highly qualified faculty and providing professional development that will encourage them to prosper. We must look at issues of faculty compensation, faculty development, spousal employment, etc.
- E. On-line graduate programs should be one of our main avenues for recruitment for our graduate programs. Examples: Two librarians within the last two years have received their Master's In Library Science from Accredited Library Schools on-line and they spent fewer than 10 days on the home campus during the two year program. We could do the same here for several of our graduate programs, thus expanding way beyond our borders.
- F. Two comments:
- a. #1 – our ability to attract and retain faculty given our low salaries. I don't think we should focus on the low salaries. By emphasizing the need to attract and retain well qualified faculty, it is implied that adequate salaries are needed to accomplish this.
 - b. #2 – Address facilities needs required to accomplish 1, 2, and 5 of the core values. This is an area that was neglected for many years and is now biting us in the butt.
- G. Maintain FSU's strength as an institution that provides access and support to students of diverse backgrounds while gradually increasing the overall academic preparation of the student body. Set realistic goals for incoming SAT/GPA, second-year retention, and graduation rates.

H. OTHER ISSUES OR CONCERNS

1. Increase faculty salaries to ensure recruitment and retention of top faculty who in turn develop and administer top academic pr How to park egos at the door and recognize that a strategic plan that suggests all parties are equal contributors will fail to inspire. As one who is keenly interested in historic preservation, I can draw an analogy to things I have learned utilizing tax credits to restore properties.

There are structures that are historically significant in their own right; these are the “wow” buildings superbly designed and true to the era. On the other hand, there are other structures that are not historically significant in and of themselves but contribute to the overall streetscape. Something would be missing without them and the whole would not be complete – but they aren’t the lead dogs. My own experience taught that telling a complete story by focusing attention on the truly recognized stars can be good for all. Something about a rising tide... Good Luck!

2. Teaching methodologies, strategies, curricula, and classroom architecture must be informed by research on the science of learning.
3. In an environment of accelerated change, FSU must be responsive to emerging needs of society.
4. A pattern of continuously diminishing state resources for public higher education has developed nationally.
5. New or expanded programs will be supported by reallocation of existing resources or through external funding.
6. Following the Board of Regents initiative, FSU will continue to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
7. Collaboration across programs, departments, divisions, and colleges can lead to enhanced student learning and improved effectiveness and efficiency.
8. Growth of FSU student population will continue but not uniformly across colleges or departments.
9. Faculty development is critical to achieving educational objectives.
10. FSU will actively contribute to economic development throughout the region.
11. The process has to be inclusive as well as engage faculty, staff, students and the local community. It also must be determined to have a positive and measurable outcome that will drive decision-making and resource allocation.