Implementation of Strategic Planning at Mt. SAC

**Purpose**

- By associating Strategic Objectives (SOs) with college goals, Mt. SAC strengthens its ability to focus action and measure progress toward its goals.
- Strategic Objectives will provide a focus that may span multiple assessment cycles, and allow us to maintain effort in a desired direction for sustained improvement over a period of time.

**How will Strategic Objectives be established?**

- IEC has identified areas of the campus that have a primary relationship to each of the college goals. These areas will be asked to provide proposed Strategic Objectives and means of assessment.
- In establishing Strategic Objectives, these areas should be efficient in their use of existing plans and planning efforts already in place (for example: Student Equity Plan, Technology Plan, Basic Skills Plan, Educational Master Plan, Human Resources Plan, VTEA plans/reports) and use these to structure aligned preliminary objectives. Also consider how the AB1417/ARCC data elements might be used in assessing the objectives.
- Input will also be requested from President’s Office on Strategic Objectives for the institution.
- IEC will receive all input, then select and recommend SOs to PAC.

**Example:** A given goal might have SOs set by several key areas. In this example, the Grant’s Office might choose to propose one or more of the following:

| GOAL #1: The College will secure funding that supports exemplary programs and services. |
| Possible Strategic Objectives (Grants Office): |
| a. Increase the FY funding level for grant projects by at least 5%, as compared to a baseline average of the previous 3 fiscal years. |
| b. Increase the number of new grant proposals submitted each fiscal year by at least 5%, as compared to a baseline average of the previous 3 fiscal years. |
| c. Maintain an average funding success rate of no less than 80%, defined as number of grants funded divided by number of proposals submitted. |
| d. Maintain a return-on-investment of no less than 20:1, defined as FY grant funding level divided by FY grants office operating budget. |

**How will Strategic Objectives be assessed and analyzed?**

- Once the objectives are in place, these same areas will provide an analysis of results relating to their assigned Strategic Objectives, and will report these to IEC.
- IEC will summarize and report campuswide progress on Strategic Objectives in its annual report to PAC. Progress on objectives along with emerging goals,
internal/external conditions, and input from leadership will drive the setting of new strategic objectives aligned with each cycle's goals.

**How will we incorporate Strategic Objectives into unit-level planning and reporting?**

- Once SOs are approved and attached to college goals, these will be rolled out in association with the corresponding goals at the start of the annual PIE cycle.
- Visibility of the SOs will enhance the relevance of college goals and help units target specific efforts toward initiatives that are presently being emphasized/measured. Participants at the unit level will not specifically be required to report on the SO (this being a function assigned at a higher level), but data may be included in the unit PIE that can be tracked to a particular SO.
- Some SOs may stay on a college goal for an extended period (2 - 3 years), while others may be achieved in a shorter timeframe.

**Will e-PIE be used?**

- The active SOs for a planning cycle will appear in association with the college goals in e-PIE. There will be no unit-level response field specifically associated with an SO.

**Will we assign Strategic Objectives to ALL college goals? Will we assess all of these in each cycle?**

- We anticipate at least two SOs under each college goal (no more than five.)
- We will assess progress on all of these annually, though some SOs are expected to ‘last’ longer than others (see next item).

**How/to what extent will Strategic Objectives be adjusted, revised, or removed in updated annual planning cycles?**

- Based on the reports received from the areas with assigned responsibility for each SO, IEC will determine the need for revision. The IEC will also invite areas to recommend new SOs as appropriate.

**What is our proposed timeline for creating objectives and communicating them (relative to next year’s PIE cycle)?**

- We hope to have sufficient input to create/recommend strategic objectives by Fall, 2008. The goal is to have these in place with the rollout of the 2008-09 PIE process.
GOALS vs. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Definition of Strategic Planning:

“Strategic planning is a systematic process through which an organization agrees on - and builds commitment among key stakeholder to - priorities that are essential to its mission and are responsive to the environment.” (Allison & Kaye, 2005: Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations: A Practical Guide and Workbook.)

Goals (and mission statements) can be broad and overarching. Strategic objectives are developed to operationalize these goals. A strategic objective is a statement that converts a goal into concrete terms that are measurable for the ultimate purpose of determining whether or not the goal was achieved.

Strategic objectives are:
- **Central** – they are relevant to the current and future needs and align with the college’s goals/mission statement
- **Measurable** – they identify indicators to determine whether or not the goal is achieved
- **Feasible** – they are realistic (but a bit challenging) given the internal and external conditions
- **Specific** – they are clear about what they are measuring
- **Time-bound** – they identify a time frame in which the objective will be accomplished

Strategic objectives serve to clarify the organization’s intentions and work most effectively when communicated with the campus community.

Examples of strategic objectives include:
- Active engagement of 15% of part-time faculty in new learning methods and systems by the end of Spring 2010
- Increase the percentage of students enrolled in 6.5 credits or more of block course and/or cohort group classes to 40% by the end of Spring 2010
- By Fall 2009, submit a revised Emergency Preparedness Plan to the Board for approval
- Increase by 20% over the initial baseline the number of employers in the District actively collaborating with college training and community service programs