

OHLONE COLLEGE
DESCRIPTION OF INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

Strategic Planning Cycle

Strategic planning at Ohlone occurs on a cyclical basis every five years and has three main components: assessment, goal setting, and goal implementation. Specific activities comprise these components. The elements of the assessment component include the following:

- an environmental scan (community needs and college outcomes in meeting those needs, both expressed in a data-oriented document),
- accreditation planning agendas from the most recent Self Study,
- results of Program & Service Reviews, and
- a thorough evaluation of the status of the college goals and objectives from the cycle that is concluding.

With the benefit of the assessment, the college analyzes the degree to which it is fulfilling its mission and meeting community needs. The next step in the cycle is a reaffirmation of college values and a review and possible revision of the college mission statement. A visioning process follows to encourage the college and community to have a voice in what the college will be in the future.

Following this work, the college determines which of the current goals should continue into the next strategic cycle and drafts new goals to be achieved during the next cycle. Goals are also expressed in specific, measurable objectives and include timeframes. Over the life of the strategic plan, objectives which achieve the goals are implemented in annual increments. Results are assessed annually. Finally, at the culmination of the cycle, a new, comprehensive assessment occurs and the cycle begins again.

Step One--Assessment

a. Environmental Scan

As shown in the planning graphic, a key element in the Strategic Planning Cycle is conducting and documenting an Environmental Scan of internal and external data and of trends that may assist college planning. The Glossary of Planning Terminology defines Environmental Scan as “the acquisition and use of information about events, trends, and relationships in the local community and beyond that informs the college of forces and needs relevant to planning future direction. Environmental scanning constitutes a primary mode for institutional learning and self assessment.” The Environmental Scan is completed by the Office of Institutional Research and is published on the college website. It is updated regularly as new information becomes available.

The Dean of Planning and Research presents the data in the Scan to the President’s Staff, the College Council, and the Board of Trustees, and answers questions pertaining to it. Suggestions for augmentation of the data are taken and implemented as appropriate.

To complement the statistical information contained in the Scan, the President conducts a series of meetings with community groups and leaders. At each meeting participants are provided basic information about Ohlone and its mission. Using a brief survey, the community participants are asked for their opinion of how the college is perceived in the community and how the college is meeting community expectations. The information collected in the community meetings is used in creating the vision for the future.

Gap Analysis:

The Institutional Research Committee, made up of faculty and administrative staff including the College Council faculty co-chair, is charged with extracting key information from the Environmental Scan data and identifying areas where the college needs to expand or improve its efforts. This information is used in goal setting.

Planning document 1: Planning Graphic

Planning document 2: Glossary of Planning Terminology

Planning document 3: Environmental Scan

Planning document 4: Ohlone 101 & Community Survey

b. Current Goals

Another key element in the assessment phase of the Strategic Planning Cycle is a thorough evaluation of the goals and objectives of the current strategic plan. The President's Staff reviews research and other findings regarding progress on or completion of the strategic goals and objectives. Using this preliminary analysis, the President completes an initial assessment and prepares a report for review by College Council. The assessment is also presented in the State of the College speech at the start of the spring semester one year prior to the completion of the strategic plan. A college-wide Strategic Planning Summit is conducted in the spring semester and faculty, staff, and students are surveyed.

Planning document 5: Assessment Report on 2005-10 College Goals

Planning document 6: College Surveys

c. Program and Services Review Results

To incorporate grass-roots ideas and areas of needed improvement from all parts of the college into consideration for new college goals, the results of Program and Services Reviews are considered. A task force appointed by College Council reviews the Program Improvement Outcomes (PIOs) and Action Plans generated from the most recent annual Program and Services Review Updates. The task force prepares a Program Improvement Objectives Assessment for the College Council recommending continuing, changing or adding to the goals and objectives based on the analysis conducted.

Planning document 7: Program Improvement Objectives Assessment

Step Two-- Setting Goals**a. Assessment and Revision of the College Mission and Values**

As part of the Strategic Plan preparation, every five years a task force appointed by the College Council reviews the mission statement and brings recommendations back to the Council. Proposed changes are reviewed by the college community and ultimately approved by the Board. The College Council considers and discusses the college mission statement in tandem with the review of proposed college goals to ensure every goal and objective is consistent with the statement. Goals are established to reflect college values and are grouped accordingly. Visioning for the college future occurs at this point in the strategic process.

b. Proposed goals and objectives

Using the strategic assessment of the previous goals and the review of the college mission, vision, and values, the President and College Council propose a set of goals to be accomplished in the next five-year cycle. The goals are comprehensive and offer involvement in improvement for all departments of the college. For each goal, the college community identifies a limited number of objectives that are most effective in achieving the goal. These objectives are stated in measurable terms and include timelines for completion, allowing for the goal to be broken down into annual increments. The College Council may

identify specific programs and services to address the objectives. Direction for college-wide improvement from the college community is provided in this manner.

The Board of Trustees reviews and approves the new plan at its June meeting.

Ohlone has several plans, as required by the California Community College Chancellor's Office, including an Educational Master Plan, a Facilities Master Plan, and an Information Technology Plan. Three committees, two of which are appointed by the College Council for facilities and IT, and the Curriculum Committee, create and oversee the master plans for these three areas. Because of its focus on student learning, the Educational Master Plan provides a foundation for all college goals. Rather than making planning decisions independently for facilities and IT, the Facilities Master Plan and the Information Technology Plan plans are integrated into the overall institutional strategic plan. This is accomplished by including a college goal which focuses on improving college resource use, including facilities and information technology. By integrating these area plans into the institution's strategic plan, the college has a holistic approach to college improvement focused on improving student learning. A Comprehensive Outline of Plans illustrates how current component plans are integrated into the strategic college goals to achieve broad educational purposes and improve institutional effectiveness.

Planning document 8: 2010-15 Proposed Goals and Objectives

Planning document 9: Comprehensive Outline of Plans

Step Three—Implementation

The next phase in the strategic planning cycle is implementation. In addition to consideration of Programs and Services Review results in setting college goals, programs and services contribute to college improvement by helping to achieve college objectives and by improving key processes within programs and services. At the conclusion of each Program and Services Review, Program Improvement Objectives (PIOs) are identified. These are statements of what the program or services needs to improve, why, and the goals and objectives which they help to accomplish. These statements are accompanied by action plans and resource needs. In order to carry out PIOs, the college has identified a process to allocate resources on an annual basis to support their accomplishment.

Planning document 10: Program and Services Review Forms

Planning document 11: Strategic Planning Timeline

Annual Planning Cycle

Annual planning is the means by which Ohlone College achieves its strategic goals. Annually, coinciding with budget deadlines, the college engages in a process to determine a list of priority improvements to undertake to achieve the college objectives. This process engages all programs and services through the annual submission of PIOs using CurricUNET. These PIOs are accompanied by action plans, resource needs, and assessment methods.

Each year, a PIO committee (a subcommittee of College Council) analyzes all PIOs using agreed-upon rubrics to determine which of them focus on program improvement and which contribute more broadly to achieving college goals and improving key processes across programs and services. The committee scores those that have college-wide impact according to a set of criteria and proposes a top twenty for resource consideration for the next fiscal year. A Resource Analysis Team (comprised of personnel from IT, Facilities, HR, Business Services, and Campus Safety, etc.) collaborates with programs and services representatives (creators of PIOs) and researches the stated need for resources to provide accurate information on costs. Once provided this input, programs and services have the opportunity to adjust their PIOs.

The Budget Committee, another subcommittee of College Council, reviews requests for augmented budgets and helps to analyze and set priorities for efficient use of resources. The committee reviews the top twenty PIOs for allocation of resources based on their impact on college goals. College Council reviews and can make changes in the recommended list, which is sent to President. Each year all PIOs and resources requests go through the process regardless of their inclusion on the previous year's list. The list is used by the Foundation for funding consideration. This is not a decision-making process but is designed instead as a recommendation to the President, who considers the recommendations and includes available resources for PIOs in the budget. The PIOs are implemented according to their action plans, and their effectiveness is assessed at the point of their completion along with their contribution to the college objectives.

Given the human resource intensiveness of teaching and learning, educational institutions typically commit most of their resources to personnel. Over 90% of a public college budget is likely to be in personnel and fixed costs. As a result, educational budgets have limited flexibility of how they may allocate money to meet college goals. Decisions about how time and talent are used are therefore critical in achieving college improvement goals. Managers, faculty and staff determine how time is devoted to achieving PIOs on a practical, day-to-day basis.

To strengthen this link between the results of Program and Services Review and resource allocation, managers annually review a report that shows how their budget has been allocated over a five-year period with the Dean of Business Services and the Vice President of Administrative Services. Budget adjustments for the coming year are made at this time.

This report viewed at the college-wide level illustrates where the college has placed its resources over time and allows the college to compare resource allocation with goal accomplishment. This historical review aids in allocating resources where they will best serve the college in the future.

Planning Document 12: PIO analysis rubric

Planning Document 13: Historical budget allocations by program

Annual Assessment of College Goals and Objectives

Each semester the President, in consultation with the College Council, assesses progress on identified college objectives. In the State of the College speeches in August and January, the President reports to the college community the status of the objectives. These speeches are video taped and the texts are made available to the public on the college website.

Planning Document 14: Sample State of the College text