

# Planning Update

March 1, 2007

Colleagues,

Last summer, the Leadership Council developed five areas of activity for our strategic plan at an all-day retreat. These emerged from our study of the visioning process through which the campus has labored for several years, enlightened by the recommendations of the Goals and Planning Committee report of last spring. I presented these five areas as part of my opening breakfast address to the campus. To familiarize you with them they are:

- Student Experience
- Faculty and Staff Worklife
- Communication
- Budget
- Enrollment Management

Under each of these five broad areas, I presented a short list of concrete goals. This simple formula has served us well thus far through the academic year. As we approach the development of a budget for next year, the members of the Administrative Cabinet and I wished to revisit these strategic areas and the goals under each. Our hope was that we might better understand the dynamic of the strategic goals in order to assist us in prioritizing budget requests as they come forward. We met with an outside consultant, who has worked with the college before. She led us through a series of activities with the goal of helping the cabinet to work better as a group and to also allow us to focus on the needs of the college and the leverage that each individual need might have with regard to other areas of need, again to help us prioritize. As a result of this process, the Cabinet has developed seven specific areas of action, which flow logically out of the five areas earlier identified. Most of them are in fact identical.

The seven areas we developed are (in no particular order):

- Student Experience
- Faculty and Staff Worklife
- Faculty Teaching Load and Salary
- Marketing
- Resource Development
- Enrollment Management
- Facilities

Notice that the category of Faculty and Staff Worklife has been divided, resulting in an additional category of Faculty Teaching Load and Salary. Similarly, Communication, which appeared on the earlier list, has become Marketing, since the prime areas of Communication that remain after the approval of the Mission Statement are in essence related to marketing. The category of Budget has become Resource Development. While we will, of course, be ever vigilant of the budget, in order to move the campus forward we must especially focus on the development of new resources and the efficient utilization of those that we already have. Facilities appeared earlier under the category of Student Experience, but our deliberations led us to rename it as a distinct category.

In looking at these areas, the Cabinet then focused on the inter-relationships. For example, under the category of Facilities, we recognized that by improving our facilities we can positively affect our enrollment, i.e. attract more students and keep more of the ones we already have. Similarly improvement in facilities can have a positive effect on the quality of worklife, since it is more enjoyable to work in newly improved surroundings. An improvement in the physical plant can also enhance our marketing of the campus, since it will be more attractive to more people. Lastly, we anticipate that changes in facilities would also enhance the student experience. As a result, one can see that an investment in facilities can have a positive effect in many of the areas identified as important in our strategic plan.

The Cabinet has now had an opportunity to look at all of these areas, and better understand the inter-relationships among them. Consequently, as budget requests come to the Cabinet from the various sectors of the campus, the requests will be analyzed in light of their impact on these general areas. Understandably many requests will potentially address more than one of the strategic areas, and thus be attractive options.

We do not yet have any real idea of what next year's budget will look like. The Governor's budget request would provide SUNY with a very small increment over last year, after satisfying areas of identified increase, such as salary increases, increased cost of benefits, and a few other items. As a result, we hope that once the Legislature has concluded its work we will have a budget very similar to this current year. But, there's many a slip twixt the cup and the lip, and so we follow the legislative process closely.

Lastly, it is my hope that the deliberations of the Administrative Cabinet will also inform the on-going planning process. As noted the strategic goals for this year flowed from the work of the Senate Goals and Planning Committee. I anticipate reporting to the committee on the

accomplishments that we have made this year, and indicate those areas where I believe we will desire to move in the future. The report of the Goals and Planning Committee will then form one of the key parts of this coming summer's deliberations of the Leadership Council as we move into 2007-2008.