STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

NELSON RUSCHE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Last Updated: Fall 2023

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INTRODUCTION

NELSON RUSCHE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS STRATEGIC PLAN

The Nelson Rusche College of Business Strategic Plan is aspirational and has at its core the college's mission, vision, and values. These concise statements on mission, vision, and values give rise to a clear strategic focus, which is supported by a broader set of mission-centered guiding principles. These items collectively result in a set of strategic priorities for the college, each with intended outcomes and indicators of success. The strategic plan is put into action in every modality — online, and at the main and off-campus locations — through a formal process for the proposal, approval, and evaluation of strategic initiatives designed to generate desired intended outcomes. Annual and five-year formal review cycles ensure continuing advancement in meeting the strategic priorities of the college. The aforementioned materials and processes are presented and summarized in this document.

MISSION, VISION, VALUES & STRATEGIC FOCUS

MISSION

The mission of the Nelson Rusche College of Business is to create a challenging learning environment that will enable our students to launch their careers with the foundation for effective leadership.

VISION

Our vision is to show continuous improvement in three interrelated areas:
creating student success, enhancing our reputation for excellence, and attracting critical resources (i.e., students, faculty, staff, and funding).

VALUES

We believe that applied learning within a personalized and collaborative setting is fundamental for creating a superior learning experience. We value high-quality research and teaching, innovation, respect for colleagues and students, and hard work and integrity in everything we do.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Learn

We are creating a personalized and applied learning environment supported by high-quality faculty, staff, and administrators.

Launch

We are creating experiences that will challenge and equip our students to find their place in a highly competitive and global environment.

Lead

We are creating engaging experiences that will challenge and equip students to make a difference in the world around them.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding Principle:
Creating Student Success

We believe that student success is balanced on three pillars: student learning, career preparation, and the development of leadership skills. We refer to these pillars as: ***Learn, Launch, and Lead***. Of these three pillars, learning is foundational. A fundamental understanding of business principles is crucial if one is to effectively launch a career and influence others. However, knowledge alone is insufficient for student success. Therefore, we also make it a priority to prepare students to launch their careers and to instill in them values and personal skills necessary for effective leadership. These pillars create a desirable value proposition for our students and are also a source of distinctive identity for our college (Figure 1).

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Figure 1. Rusche College of Business Principles Logo

Learn

Our intent is to provide a variety of learning experiences whose cumulative impact will transform student thinking. This is the core of what we do. The role of faculty will be to continue to deliver high-quality instruction in current and relevant discipline-specific content, to seek improvement in teaching methods and curriculum, and to stay current in our respective disciplines through impactful research. The role of staff and administrators will be to provide support in the form of resources, training, and services.

Launch

Our intent is to provide a strong foundation of business and discipline-specific knowledge, combined with a variety of networking and "finishing" experiences that will help students embark on careers that are uniquely suited to their skills and personalities. The role of faculty will be to provide current and relevant discipline-specific content; to support college and university-level networking events; to support students in their job search efforts; and, where appropriate, to encourage students in the development of career skills. The role of staff and administrators will be to provide resources, participation, and opportunities for networking and "finishing" experiences and to seek continuous improvement in the number and quality of our networking events.

Lead

Leaders combine relevant business knowledge with effective personal skills to influence those around them. Our intent is to provide a foundation of business and discipline-specific knowledge, combined with a variety of opportunities for the development of relevant personal skills that will provide the foundation for effective leadership. The role of faculty will be to provide current and discipline-specific content, to create opportunities for students to develop relevant personal skills in the classroom and through extracurricular activities, and to serve as mentors and personal role models for students. The role of staff and administrators will be to support and reward faculty efforts and to develop and participate in opportunities for students to learn from and be mentored by business leaders.

Guiding Principle:
Enhancing our Reputation

In addition to our student success strategies, it is imperative that we develop strategies for enhancing our reputation. Our intent is to build awareness of the SFA and Rusche brand in the business and academic communities by promoting the success of our students and alumni, and the academic and professional success of our faculty and staff. Also, where appropriate, we will engage in various community and service projects. In addition to the efforts of student, faculty, and staff, we will rely on various stakeholders outside the Rusche College of Business such as alumni, university staff, and our executive advisory board to help enhance our reputation.

Guiding Principle:
Attracting Resources

It is also crucial that we take an active role in developing strategies for attracting and retaining high-quality students, attracting and retaining quality faculty, developing synergistic relationships with the business community and alumni, and attracting outside funding sources. The intent is to create a growing pool of resources that will allow greater opportunities to create student success.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

Our institutional success model, developed by the Strategic Planning Committee, has guided our thinking throughout this process. We believe that institutional success is based on three interdependent factors: student success, reputation, and resources. The cornerstone for institutional success is student success. Successful students, in turn, will enhance our reputation, which will attract critical resources.

The most important of these resources are students, faculty, and funding. Funding from the state is not likely to increase significantly, so relationships with potential donors are also an important resource. Increased funding, combined with quality students and faculty, will lead to improved student success, thus perpetuating an ever-improving cycle of success. Figure 2 shows these guiding principles in action:

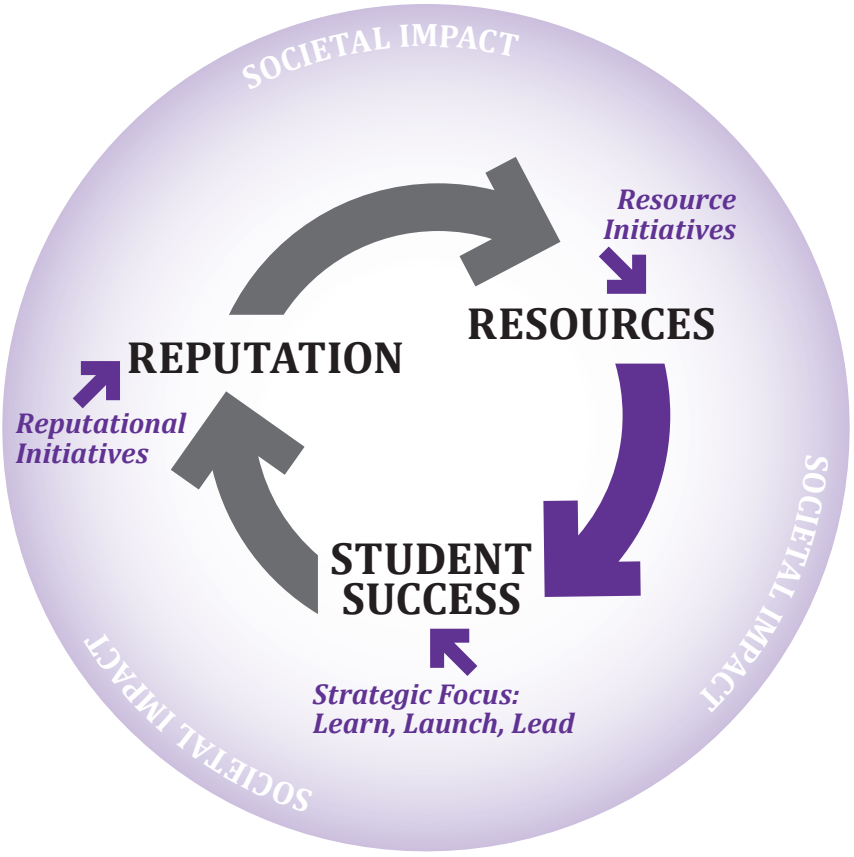

Figure 2. Guiding Principles in Action

Our mission and strategic focus are oriented toward creating student success through three pillars: ***Learn, Launch, and Lead***. We also believe that it is important to develop separate strategic initiatives to promote our reputation and attract resources.

SOCIETAL IMPACT

A major initiative in the Rusche College of Business is societal impact which is implicit in our mission. Our Societal Impact Statement describes this commitment:

> We produce value for our stakeholders by achieving our mission to create a challenging learning environment, launching student careers, and providing a foundation of leadership. The Rusche College of Business creates this value in part by implementing curriculum and research that leverage experiential learning to positively impact regional businesses and community-based organizations. In doing so, we nurture partnerships with community leaders who are devoted to improving non-profit organizations, our regional industry, and society at large.

Our vision for the Rusche College of Business sees continuous improvement throughout the entire cycle in these guiding principles.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of our institutional success model requires formulating concise representations of our guiding principles in the form of strategic priorities, each with explicitly stated intended outcomes. These strategic priorities and intended outcomes serve as a reference and further, provide guidance for all decision-making in the college. They also serve as a direct link to the university strategic plan (see Appendix A). The strategic plan is set into action with the proposal, evaluation, implementation, and assessment of strategic initiatives aimed at achieving specific intended outcomes. The document used in guiding this process in the Nelson Rusche College of Business is presented below (Figure 3):

Strategic Plan Guiding Document

Strategic Priorities	Intended Outcomes	Indicators
1. STUDENT SUCCESS		
1a. Learn: Create a personalized and applied learning environment supported by high quality faculty, staff, and administrators.	**Educate students:** To deliver high quality and innovative instruction in current and relevant discipline specific curriculum.	▪ Enrollment (RCOB Dean Assessment data – Obj. 5 – Enrollment and SCH) ▪ Experiential learning scholarships ▪ Classroom and building technology upgrades and renovations ▪ Assurance of Learning change reports ▪ Curricular change report ▪ Senior exit survey results (academic goals, real world projects, team projects, experiential learning opportunities)
	Transformative learning experiences: To provide students with opportunities for applied learning and industry engagement.	
	Learning environment: To provide a physical environment and technology to create a collegial space where students, staff, and faculty can grow.	
1b. Launch: Create experiences that will challenge and equip our students to find their place in a highly dynamic, competitive, and global environment	**Finishing:** To provide support to students as they develop career readiness skills.	▪ Passport program event participation (RCOB Dean Assessment Data – Obj. 1 – Student Professional Dev.) ▪ Senior exit survey results (passport participation, student organization participation, resume creation and evaluation, attend career fair, professional goals, and internship participation) ▪ Study abroad participation ▪ Participation in student organizations in RCOB (member head count and activities) ▪ Job placement data ▪ Internship participation (RCOB Dean Assessment data – Obj. 2)
	Advising: To deliver quality academic and career advising to our students.	
	Cultural competence: To provide curricula and activities where students are prepared to engage in a global business environment and have created opportunities to interact with people from various backgrounds.	

Strategic Priorities	Intended Outcomes	Indicators
1c. Lead: Create innovative and engaging experiences that will challenge and equip students to make a difference in the world around them.	**By example:** To provide service by engaging the college, university, our professions, and our community as an example for our students of the importance of leadership. **Student organizations:** To create opportunities for our students to develop their leadership skills in student organizations and co-curricular activities. **Integrity:** To create an environment that values ethical and responsible leadership in our faculty, staff and students.	▪ Senior exit survey (leadership in student organizations and work with a mentor) ▪ Mentorship Program participation ▪ College2Career Conference Participation ▪ Rusche Distinguished Speaker Series activities ▪ Guest speakers in Passport Program and other college activities
2. ENHANCE OUR REPUTATION: Promote the success and impact of our students and faculty by communicating a consistent brand to prospective students, our alumni, and others in the community.	**Impact:** To encourage and support impactful research contributions by our faculty. **Brand:** To have a consistent brand that is known and communicated by students, employers, and others in the community. **Promotion:** To promote the successes of our students, faculty, and alumni.	▪ RCOB Dean Assessment Data (Obj. 3 – Research) ▪ Rusche Review ▪ Department Faculty/Staff Awards ▪ RCOB Annual Faculty Awards ▪ Social Media metrics and engagement
3. ATTRACT CRITICAL RESOURCES: Attract and retain high-quality students and faculty, and build relationships in the community to financially support student success.	**Community Engagement:** To forge connections in the local community, and with businesses, alumni, and others to enhance our reputation, attract resources, and to develop a productive network for our students. **New funding sources:** To create an ever- widening pool of resources that will allow greater opportunities for student success. **Recruitment:** To attract and provide support to an ever-improving quality of student. **High quality faculty and staff:** To attract, retain, and reward high-quality and impactful faculty, staff, and administrators.	▪ RCOB Dean Assessment Data (Obj. 4 – Fundraising) ▪ Corporate Partnership Engagement ▪ College2Career Conference participation ▪ Professional Development as a tool to reward quality publications ▪ Guest speakers in Passport Program and other college activities ▪ Scholarships for high quality student recruitment

Figure 3. Strategic Plan Guiding Document

The Office of the Dean is responsible for the collection of data listed in the *Indicators* section above. The Strategic Planning Committee will review these data annually to ensure that these intended outcomes are being addressed appropriately.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE GENERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The development and implementation of strategic initiatives designed to generate desired intended outcomes is essential to the successful implementation of the Rusche College of Business Strategic Plan. We embrace the notion that valid ideas can be generated by any stakeholder of the college independently or through collaboration with others. By fostering an innovative and entrepreneurial culture, proposals for new strategic initiatives are encouraged from all sources. Stakeholders both inform, and are informed by, the Rusche College of Business Strategic Plan.

The strategic plan is central to both the generation of proposals and the decision process related to the approval/implementation of any strategic initiative. While new and innovative approaches to developing initiatives are encouraged and supported, the traditional process for the generation, approval, and implementation of new initiatives is as follows:

1. College stakeholders, referencing the strategic plan guiding document, collaboratively or independently develop new initiatives directed at achieving one or more intended outcome.

2. Proposals outlining specific details, including necessary funding, intended outcomes addressed by the initiative, and proposed indicators and measurement processes, are forwarded to the Dean.

3. The Dean gathers additional stakeholder feedback, as is appropriate to the proposal.

4. The Dean, in collaboration with the College Executive Committee and other relevant parties, evaluates each initiative based upon its fit with the strategic plan and its impact on resource optimization.

5. A decision is rendered by the Dean regarding whether the initiative will be implemented, rejected, or delayed.

6. If approved, the initiative is reported to the Strategic Planning Committee for appropriate recording of the event.

This process is shown on the following page in Figure 4:

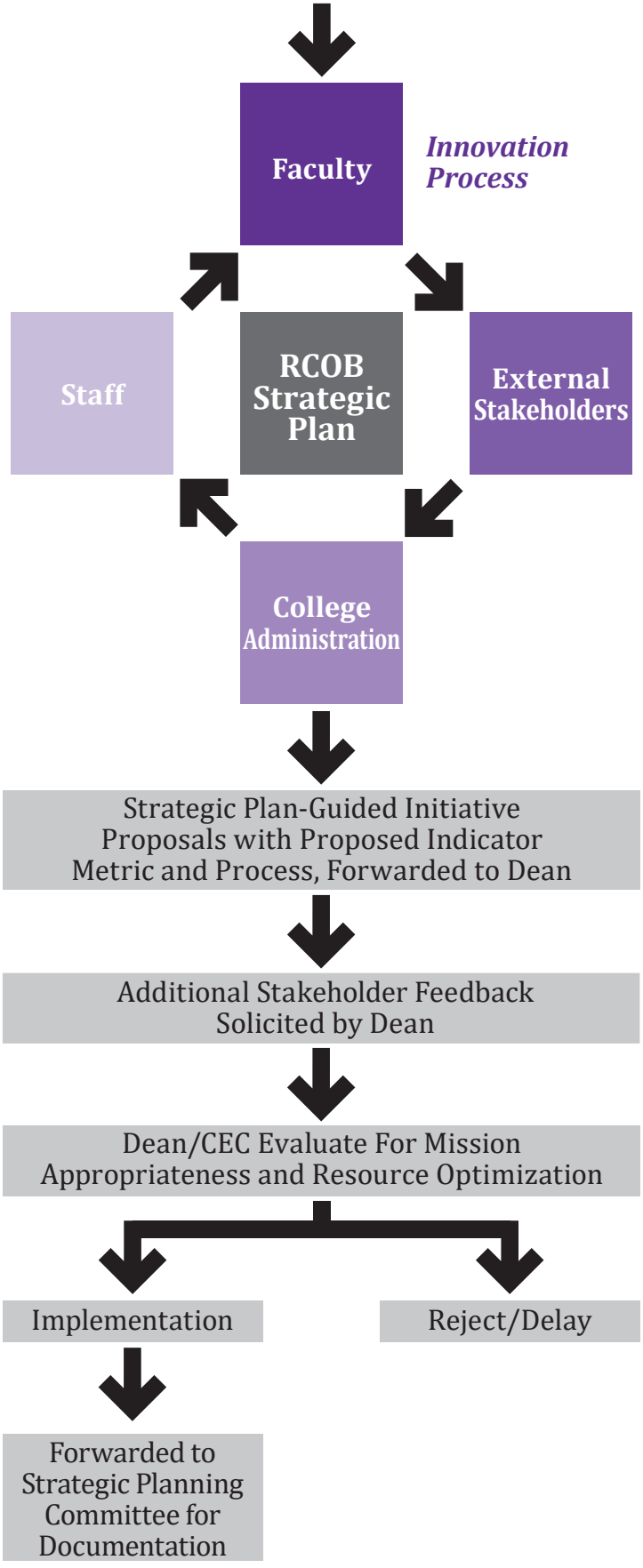

Figure 4. Process for the Generation, Approval, and Implementation of New Initiatives

STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

The Strategic Plan Guiding Document is a living document used to continually guide decision-making in the college; therefore, it is imperative that progress on initiating and assessing strategic initiatives be communicated regularly through the updating and distribution of this document.

This process begins with the final step of the strategic initiative implementation process, where information on the implementation of an initiative is forwarded to the Strategic Planning Committee. Afterwards, the following steps are observed:

1. In the fall semester of each year the Strategic Planning Committee reviews the college's Risk Assessment to identify and evaluate any potential risks and consider any necessary actions. This process is guided by the Guiding Document for Risk Assessment, as presented in Appendix B.

2. During the course of the academic year the Dean, as co-chair of the strategic planning committee, records all information on strategic initiatives in the Strategic Plan Tracking Document and uploads this file to the Rusche College of Business common drive.

3. In the spring of the academic year, the dean's office updates data on all Indicators in the guiding document.

4. The Strategic Planning Committee meets in the spring of each year to verify the completeness and accuracy of the tracking document, and evaluate the indicators in the guiding document. The committee provides feedback to the dean concerning the accuracy of the tracking document, and issues identified regarding the performance indicators.

5. The Dean shares the updated tracking document and indicator data with faculty, staff, administrators, and external stakeholders and formal discussions of the results are help in various venues.

6. Stakeholders use the updated tracking document and performance indicators for the generation of new strategic initiative proposals.

FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

In addition to the annual review process each fall, all aspects of the Strategic Plan and supporting documents are thoroughly reviewed every five years, or any time a substantial change is deemed necessary. During the fall semester of the fifth year of the Strategic Plan, the Strategic Planning Committee meets to conduct a review of the mission, vision, values, and strategic focus of the college. This review process includes broad-based stakeholder feedback, and results in an approved version of the plan that may be either completely new, significantly revised, or essentially unchanged. The new mission, vision, values, and strategic focus must be approved by a majority vote of the full-time faculty of the college. Upon approval, the Strategic Planning Committee, in consultation with faculty and in conjunction with the College Executive Council, approves a new Strategic Plan Guiding Document that is consistent with the newly approved mission, vision, and strategic focus. This document may be a completely new document, a moderately revised document, or it may be left essentially unchanged, depending upon the extent of the revisions made to the mission, vision, values, and strategic focus of the college. This process is completed by the end of the spring semester, at which time the new strategic plan becomes effective.

SOCIETAL IMPACT MICRO-PLAN

Societal Impact Mission Statement
"We produce value for our stakeholders by achieving our mission to create a challenging learning environment, launching student careers, and providing a foundation of leadership. The Rusche College of Business creates this value in part by implementing a curriculum and research that leverages experiential learning to positively impact regional businesses and community-based organizations. In so doing, we nurture partnerships with community leaders who are devoted to improving non-profit organizations, our regional industry, and society at large."

Societal Impact Vision
Our vision is to impact the East Texas region by becoming the region's primary resource for university assistance in matters for which faculty, staff and student expertise may be leveraged to assist small business development, management of non-profit organizations, and regional economic growth.

Overview:
The Rusche College of Business plans to foster its societal impact statement by formalizing a position designated as Societal Impact Director. The Societal Impact Director will have oversight of a "Societal Impact Clearinghouse", which will be the department that will gather and receive possible social engagement opportunities and distributes opportunities. Overall, the objective of the Societal Impact clearinghouse is to utilize the expertise of the Rusche College of Business faculty to increase the engagement between the faculty and students through experiential learning projects in cooperation with regional businesses and community–based organizations. The objective is to have an impact on the regional economy. The objectives are stated formally as:

Objectives
1. Increase engagement between Rusche College of Business ("RCOB") students and faculty and local and regional businesses and industries.
2. Utilize the expertise of RCOB faculty to positively impact the local and regional economy.

The above objectives will be accomplished with the following action plan, illustrated in Figure 5.

Action Plan
1. Initially develop and fund a new, part-time position in the College of Business designated as the "Societal Impact Director". After initial development, the Societal Impact Director position will be developed into a full-time position. Suggested duties for this position include:
   a. Publicize/market faculty engagement opportunities (consulting, business projects, etc.) toward local and regional businesses and industries.
   b. Serve as a point of contact for local and regional businesses needing assistance.
   c. Help match the needs of local and regional businesses and industries with the proper faculty members' expertise and/or student projects.
   d. Serve as the COB liaison for CARRI and develop appropriate economic development partnerships.
2. Develop a database of faculty expertise to facilitate the connection of faculty with local business needs.
3. Market faculty expertise/opportunities for engagement with local and regional businesses and industries.
4. Follow-up projects and make improvements to increase effectiveness.

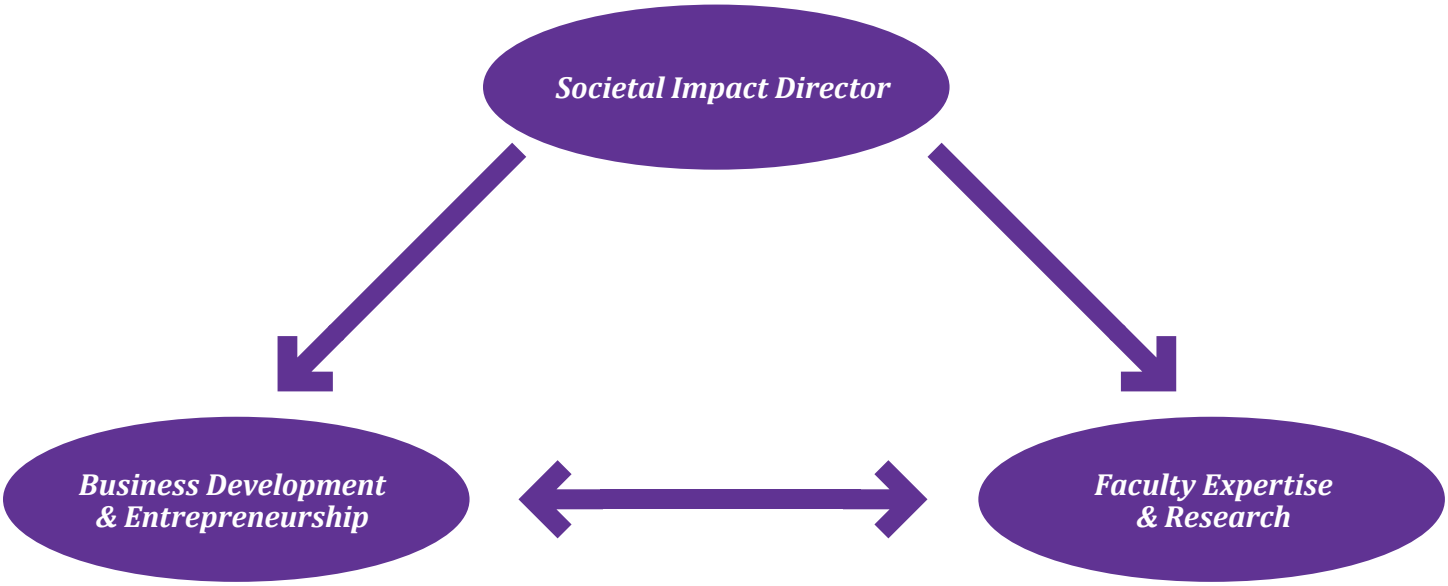

Figure 5. Societal Impact Action Plan

APPENDIX A

http://www.sfasu.edu/strategicplan/

SFA ENVISIONED – STRATEGIC PLAN, 2015-2023

Stephen F. Austin State University's strategic plan is comprised of four operational goals, one overarching goal, and one foundational goal.

The overarching goal of SFA is to provide students with transformative experiences. The foundational goal is meaningful and sustained enrollment growth. The four operational goals are as follows:

I. Attracting and Supporting High-Quality Faculty and Staff
II. Fostering Academic and Co-Curricular Innovation
III. Redefining University Culture
IV. Increasing Connections

The strategic plan is presented visually by the following image:

The Strategic Plan of the Rusche College of Business is directly linked to the Strategic Plan of Stephen F. Austin State University. The chart on the following page is a variation of the Strategic Plan Guiding Document and is used to illustrate the link between the strategic goals and intended outcomes of the College, and the strategic goals of the University.

The following abbreviations denote the university goals:

O = Overarching Goal of Transformative Experiences

F = Foundational Goal of Meaningful and Sustained Enrollment Growth

I = Attracting and Supporting High-Quality Faculty

II = Fostering Academic and Co-Curricular Innovation

III= Redefining University Culture

IV= Increasing Connections

See chart on next page:

Strategic Priorities	Intended Outcomes	University Goals Addressed
1. STUDENT SUCCESS:		
1a. Learn: Create a personalized and applied learning environment supported by high-quality faculty, staff, and administrators.	**Educate students:** To deliver high-quality and innovative instruction in current and relevant discipline-specific curriculum.	0, II
	Transformative learning experiences: To provide students with opportunities for applied learning and industry engagement.	0, II, IV
	Learning environment: To provide a physical environment and technology to create a collegial space where students, staff, and faculty can grow.	I, II, III
1b. Launch: Create experiences that will challenge and equip our students to find their place in a highly dynamic, competitive, and global environment.	**Finishing:** To provide support to students as they develop career-readiness skills.	0, II
	Advising: To deliver quality academic and career advising to our students.	F
	Cultural competence: To provide curricula and activities where students are prepared to engage in a global business environment and have created opportunities to interact with people from various backgrounds.	0, II
1c. Lead: Create innovative and engaging experiences that will challenge and equip students to make a difference in the world around them.	**By example:** To provide service by engaging the college, university, our professions, and our community as an example for our students of the importance of leadership.	IV
	Student organizations: To create opportunities for our students to develop their leadership skills in student organizations and co-curricular activities.	0, II
	Integrity: To create an environment that values ethical and responsible leadership in our faculty, staff, and students.	III
2. ENHANCE OUR REPUTATION: Promote the success and impact of our students and faculty by communicating a consistent brand to prospective students, our alumni, and others in the community.	**Impact:** To encourage and support impactful research contributions by our faculty.	I, II, IV
	Brand: To have a consistent brand that is known and communicated by students, employers, and others in the community.	F, IV
	Promotion: To promote the successes of our students, faculty, and alumni.	F, I, IV

Strategic Priorities	Intended Outcomes	University Goals Addressed
3. ATTRACT CRITICAL RESOURCES: Attract and retain high-quality students and faculty, and build relationships in the community to financially support student success.	**Community Engagement:** To forge connections in the local community, and with businesses, alumni, and others to enhance our reputation, attract resources, and to develop a productive network for our students.	F, I, IV
	New funding sources: To create an ever-widening pool of resources that will allow greater opportunities for student success.	F, IV
	Recruitment: To attract and provide support to an ever-improving quality of student.	F
	High-quality faculty and staff: To attract, retain, and reward high-quality and impactful faculty, staff, and administrators.	I, IV

APPENDIX B

Academic institutions are facing unprecedented challenges that are constantly evolving in the current environment. Nelson Rusche College of Business is approaching these challenges head-on and has developed the following Risk Analysis document that provides contingencies if material risks develop. The Strategic Planning Committee evaluates the Risk Analysis annually.

Risk Analysis: Nelson Rusche College of Business

Risk Description	Likelihood of Risk Occurring	Impact if Risk Occurred	Severity (based on Impact and Likelihood)	Mitigating Action(s)	Oversight Responsibility
Enrollment volatility	Medium	High	High	▪ Develop Nelson Rusche College specific recruiting campaigns (Seven Touches). ▪ Develop a social media marketing program and recruit existing students to assist with its development. ▪ Increase engagement opportunities for students with Nelson Rusche College of Business. ▪ Develop open-house events that engage students with the Nelson Rusche College of Business and the individual departments. ▪ Work with the University recruiting efforts making sure it aligns with the Nelson Rusche College of Business. ▪ Attract and maintain a pool of highly qualified adjuncts to absorb enrollment growth. ▪ More recruitment and communication with local/ regional/area high schools. ▪ Develop plans and relationships with community/junior colleges.	Dean's Office and Academic Unit Head

Ability to recruit and retain qualified faculty	High	High	High	▪ Develop relationships with local community leaders that qualify as adjunct faculty.
				▪ Work with the University on developing faculty hiring plan.
				▪ Work towards attracting competitive resources, such as:
				  ▪ Endowments
				  ▪ Research support
				  ▪ Summer research/teaching
				  ▪ Salaries and workloads
				  ▪ Institutional reputation
				  ▪ Summer stipends
					Dean's Office and Academic Unit Head

Risk Description	Likelihood of Risk Occurring	Impact if Risk Occurred	Severity (based on Impact and Likelihood)	Mitigating Action(s)	Oversight Responsibility
University allocation of budget cuts to Nelson Rusche College of Business*	Medium	High	High	▪ Ensure the University is aware of the financial needs of the Rusche College of Business through necessary representation.	Dean's Office
Loss of corporate partnerships and funding	Low	Medium	Medium	▪ Provide additional engagement opportunities for corporate partnerships with students. ▪ Expand pool of partners to mitigate impact of any potential drop-out partners.	Dean's Office and Academic Unit Head
Change in course load policy	Medium	High	High	▪ Emphasize the importance of AACSB accreditation and publication production.	Dean's Office
Capacity Constraints within the Nelson Rusche College of Business	Medium	Medium	Medium	▪ Ensure physical resources are adequate to support current and projected student population.	Dean's Office and Academic Unit Head
Public Relations and Reputation Management	High	Medium	Medium	▪ Work with SFASU Marketing Department to develop Nelson Rusche College of Business marketing campaigns. ▪ Public relations-focused outreach ▪ Image development and defense ▪ Branding ▪ Industry recognition	Dean's Office
Significant University Policy Changes	Low	High	High	▪ Have the necessary Nelson Rusche College of Business representation on university policy committees.	Dean's Office
Material Decrease in Student Retention at Rusche College of Business	Low	High	Medium	▪ Engagement with students earlier and more often ▪ Intro to Business Class ▪ Market Research ▪ Early Alert ▪ Parent/Family Involvement ▪ Expanded Internship Opportunities ▪ Enhanced Recruitment/Job Fairs	Dean's Office and Academic Unit Head

*Change of 5%