**Redefine University Culture**

**Applicable Vision Statement Elements**

[4] We will achieve financial sustainability by meeting tough choices head-on and making smart decisions about the future of the university. We will diversify our revenue streams, allocate our resources strategically, increase our private funding, and achieve meaningful enrollment growth. We will invest in our people and achieve appropriate levels of compensation, reward, and recognition. Professional development for faculty and staff will be seen as an investment and not an expense because our people are the greatest asset we have.

##### [6] Our campus culture will be open, collaborative, and engaged. We will have an energetic and respectful workplace where civility, inclusivity, and accountability are guiding principles for everyone. We will become well known for the high quality of our faculty and staff. People will feel valued as employees of the university and work hard to sustain the sense of community that distinguishes us. Communication will be robust, transparent, and trusted.

**Strategy #1: Determine cultural values, communicate those values to stakeholders, and recognize exceptional displays of those values.**

Rationale: To improve culture, the university must determine the cultural beliefs/values employees will strive to achieve. However, this set of cultural beliefs/values should not be dictated by senior leadership but should instead be determined collectively by the university’s body of employees. Once these values are determined, they should be communicated to all employees, and evidence of their display should be recognized. Doing so not **only** provides examples to the campus of what positive culture looks like but also acknowledges the efforts of those who go above and beyond to improve the university and advance its mission.

**Action Step #1: Gather input from employees on what they believe our cultural beliefs/values should be.**

Purpose: In order for there to be maximum buy-in of a vision of an improved, more engaged university culture, campus employees must be given the opportunity to provide input on what our employee cultural beliefs/values are.

**Task #1: Host Sensing Sessions to solicit employee input.**

Explanation: Sensing Sessions will be an approximately one-hour event in which employees answer a series of questions about campus culture and how it can be improved. Information gleaned will be used to develop a cultural beliefs/values statement.

Resources Needed: Places to host sessions, facilitators, big marker pads, markers, small round stickers, pens, index cards, and possibly snacks.

Immediate Targets: Host Sensing Sessions in January and February 2016.

Long-Range Targets: N/A

Impacted Departments: All campus divisions.

**Task #2: Formulate online survey equivalent of Sensing Sessions to provide opportunity for input to those who can’t come to a Sensing Session.**

Explanation: Those who cannot attend a Sensing Session need the opportunity to express their opinions as well.

Resources Needed: Qualtrics

Immediate Targets: Leave survey open for at least a week.

Long-Range Targets: N/A

Impacted Departments: All divisions.

**Action Step #2: Communicate collectively-determined cultural beliefs/values to campus community.**

Purpose: After employees have been given the opportunity to provide input on the university’s cultural beliefs/vision, that input should be consolidated and a concise cultural beliefs statement produced. This statement should then be communicated to all employees, emphasizing that every action every employee undertakes should reflect those beliefs.

**Task #1: Develop campaign (using media, but also using VPs to reach individuals and academic units) to disseminate information about beliefs/values and constantly reinforce their importance.**

Explanation: It is not enough to announce the cultural beliefs statement; instead, the statement needs to be “sold” to the campus community so that every employee understands how his/her daily work and actions reinforce those beliefs. We recommend that items related to the campaign be disseminated monthly.

Resources Needed: University Marketing Communications team, social media coordinator

Immediate Targets: Launch campaign in Spring 2016

Long-Range Targets: Continue campaign indefinitely

Impacted Departments: University Marketing Communications, Vice Presidents

**Task #2: Revise New Faculty/New Employee Orientation to incorporate cultural beliefs/values and inculcate new employees with those beliefs/values.**

Explanation: Equally as important as perpetuating the cultural beliefs statement is introducing new employees to it upon their arrival. To this end, the New Faculty Orientation and the New Employee Orientation need to be revised to include the cultural beliefs statement and to ensure that the orientations themselves adhere to the values set forth in the statement.

Resources Needed: evaluation on current/past NEO/NFOs, input on how to improve NEO/NFO

Immediate Targets: begin delivering revised NEO by May 1; deliver revised NFO in August

Long-Range Targets: N/A

Impacted Departments: Human Resources, New Faculty Orientation Committee

**Action Step #3: Recognize exceptional displays of cultural beliefs/values.**

Purpose: To perpetuate adherence to the cultural beliefs statement, we must constantly recognize (and possibly reward) employees and actions that exemplify our cultural beliefs/values. Doing so not only showcases to the campus community the kinds of actions that constitute good examples of our cultural beliefs but also increases the likelihood of those behaviors in other employees.

**Task #1: Showcase positive examples of employee engagement/exemplifying beliefs/values via print, video, and social media campaign.**

Explanation: We must reinforce our desire for employees to adhere to the cultural beliefs statement by showcasing positive examples of engagement. Examples of what we’re thinking about: weekly email/inclusion in SFA Today of an employee showcasing the cultural beliefs statement, video interview of employee/supervisor/appropriate VP discussing good example and explaining why it is good, or perhaps a “caught in the act” social media campaign in which employees are encouraged to document—either via photograph or written affirmation—other employees adhering to the cultural beliefs statement. (Note that this last one in particular is a form of employee activism!) This could be a social media campaign as well as something that comes in out in a weekly message to faculty and staff.

Resources Needed: University Marketing Communications

Immediate Targets: Begin within one month of announcing the cultural beliefs statement.

Long-Range Targets: Continue indefinitely.

Impacted Departments: University Marketing Communications, social media coordinator

**Task #2: Develop recognition program, honoring those who show exceptional discretionary effort and those who are exemplars of cultural beliefs/values.**

Explanation: A system of recognizing employees who showcase the cultural beliefs needs to be in place. The system should provide a means not only for supervisors to recognize their employees but also for employees to recognize each other. These recognitions should come from the VPs and the president. Perhaps there should also be some form of reward for honorees.

Resources Needed: Online form for collecting submissions, recognition/reward for recipients

Immediate Targets: Begin within one month of announcing the cultural beliefs statement.

Long-Range Targets: Continue indefinitely.

Impacted Departments: ITS

**Action Step #4: Continuously assess culture via cultural engagement surveys.**

Purpose: Keep a constant pulse on campus culture and evaluate effectiveness of cultural initiatives.

**Task #1: Develop brief survey to measure satisfaction of university culture.**

Explanation: In order to measure culture, a measurement instrument must be developed. University Culture Team will develop instrument and submit to vice presidents for review.

Resources Needed: Samples of other employee satisfaction surveys, input from IR, others to ensure survey will provide useful, reliable data

Immediate Targets: To be completed in early spring 2016.

Long-Range Targets: N/A

Impacted Departments: N/A

**Task #2: Deploy survey in January 2016**

Explanation: Survey must be deployed to measure satisfaction and to provide a baseline. Recommend that survey be sent to all employees from all four VP email accounts.

Resources Needed: Qualtrics.

Immediate Targets: Deployment in early spring 2016.

Long-Range Targets: N/A

Impacted Departments: N/A

**Task #3: Deploy survey every six months to randomly-selected pool of 25% of total employees.**

Explanation: Data regarding satisfaction must be routinely collected from employees.

Resources Needed: Assistance of ITS to randomly generate list of 25% of employees.

Immediate Targets: Increase satisfaction by TBD% in coming year.

Long-Range Targets: Depends on baseline; perhaps increase satisfaction by TBD% by 2023?

Impacted Departments: All divisions

**Task #4: Routinely evaluate survey data and identify areas of potential improvement.**

Explanation: Survey data will be available to campus at large via Strategic Plan website. Vice presidents will target areas for improvement.

Resources Needed: Individual/team to examine/evaluate data.

Immediate Targets: Identify areas of concern and implement fixes for items that are immediately actionable. Develop plans for fixes that require additional time and resources.

Impacted Departments: All divisions

**Strategy #2: Enhance leadership through professional development and engagement opportunities.**

Rationale: The basic purposes of leadership development within the American higher education system are to enable and encourage faculty, students, administrators, and other staff to change and transform institutions so that they can more effectively enhance student learning and development, generate new knowledge, and serve the community. This further empowers students to become agents of positive social change in the larger society. Effective implementation and execution of a strategic plan requires a strategic leadership development process. Leadership envisions future direction, aligns resources, and motivates the commitment of people toward this common purpose. The guidance and support of leadership is a key element in an engaged culture, which is a fundamental component of our strategic plan. We must invest in the development of our campus leaders.

**Action Step #1: Increase employee engagement.**

Purpose: High employee engagement drives discretionary effort, innovation, stakeholder loyalty, quality, productivity, profitability, and retention of top talent. Employee engagement is the emotional commitment an employee has to the organization and its goals and requires a mutual commitment between the university and its employees to go beyond the level of effort normally required to attain organizational goals.

**Task #1: Initiate a campus campaign for engagement and leadership visibility.**

Explanation: Encourage others to emulate engagement by making choices and taking actions that lead to meaningful dialogue and bring people together on a one-on-one scale. Create personal connections in an exceptional setting. Examples include:

* Organized, informal lunch groups
* Holding meetings out on campus in lieu of private suites
* Impromptu morning or afternoon visits to areas they do not normally interact with on a daily basis
* Voluntary mentorship

Resources Needed: Time

Immediate Targets: Vice presidents, college deans, and other division directors should increase visibility through engagement events every two weeks, actively seeking out those whom they do not normally interact with on a daily basis.

Long-Range Targets: Beginning in 2017, all campus leaders conduct engagement activities on a weekly basis.

Impacted Departments: All

**Task #2: Cultural engagement surveys.** *See also Strategy 1, Action Step 4.*

Explanation: Keep a constant pulse on campus culture and evaluate effectiveness of cultural initiatives.

**Action Step #2: Enhance university leadership via training and development programs that support and sustain the cultural change inherent in the strategic plan.**

Purpose: To accomplish the objectives of the strategic plan for leaders at all levels.

* Clarify the goals and strategies of the university through effective and sustained communication;
* Model expected behaviors and actions;
* Foster a sense of community through consistency and authenticity of action:
* Provide the rationale for the aims of the organization so that employees find meaning in what they do.

**Task #1: Develop leadership enhancement program to support Strategic Plan initiatives.**

Explanation: Successful organizational change depends on leaders. Certain concepts are critical to the success of the plan. Equipping and refining these skills is best accomplished through a formal leadership development program that assists in the alignment of university leaders and refines campus-wide communication.

* Reinforcing and reviewing the skills and attributes associated with a large-scale organizational transformation – what works and what does not;
* Realizing how to leverage employee engagement and build commitment to support the strategic plan;
* Balancing between leading and managing while accomplishing all strategic initiatives – ultimately creating a standard for accountability.

Leadership development should be an explicitly institutional commitment; it should be practiced at the highest levels and encouraged throughout the institution. Leaders should pay attention to their own effectiveness and vitality, and develop strategies for ensuring that others have opportunities to improve their skills and obtain new ideas and perspectives. If a leader’s efforts are seen as legitimate and important for the institution, the tone will be set for others to be equally earnest and deliberate.

Resources Needed: Time, Professional Coaches/Trainers, Training Venue, Financing

Immediate Targets: Campus leadership to participate specialized program(s) suited for higher education for the purpose of supporting leadership alignment toward strategic goals. Recommended in fiscal year 2017.

Long-Range Targets: Continued participation by those who supervise others in program(s) to further emphasize the mission and strengthen the alignment toward strategic goals. Recommended in fiscal year 2018 and beyond as needed/ feasible.

Impacted Departments: All

**Task #2: Conduct university leadership policy and practice inventory.**

Explanation: University policies and practices should be reviewed during the initial phase of planning university leadership development initiatives. Examples include:

* Do explicit policies regarding leadership development exist? If yes, what are their goals, and how are they measured?
* Are the policies disseminated broadly and often (at least annually) to faculty and administrators?
* Do individual colleges, divisions, and departments have leadership succession development plans? Are they linked to institutional goals?
* Is there a single person or office that coordinates leadership development activities throughout the institution? Are there sufficient resources and authority to be effective? If not, why not? Would designating a single person be a desirable option at the institution? Are there other coordinating mechanisms? How do they operate? Are academic and administrative personnel included in them? Are senior officers?
* How does the university identify people with leadership potential? What happens once they are identified?
* How and why are people selected to participate in formal leadership development programs (either on campus or off campus)? Is the selection process succeeding in casting the net widely?
* How are people prepared to get the most out of a leadership development program? How do they share what they have learned with others on campus?
* Are administrators expected to engage in professional development activities? Is this expectation reflected in performance evaluation criteria?
* Is there planning for leadership development? Is it linked to the overall institutional plan or tied to specific institutional objectives? Are there mechanisms for reviewing and modifying the plan and for assessing progress?
* Is information on leadership development activities disseminated throughout the campus? On the costs associated with these activities? Who gathers this information? How is it used?
* Is there a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the leadership development plan? Have criteria of effectiveness been formulated? How and by whom?

Resources Needed: Time

Immediate Targets: Assemble a group of individuals to inventory, review and recommend changes and/ or creation of policy and procedure regarding leadership enhancement by the end of fiscal year 2016.

Long-Range Targets: Present recommendations to administration by the end of fiscal year 2017.

Impacted Departments: All

**Task #3: Develop Leadership SFA program similar to that in many municipal communities.**

Explanation: The rapidly changing landscape of higher education has caused the development of leadership talent to become a strategic imperative. A Leadership SFA series should be designed as an orientation to campus operations and the campus as a community as well as a leadership program which promotes ongoing involvement and transparency. It would provide opportunities to inform and connect new employees and those who are new to leadership positions. Content should cover topics that invest in the next generation of leaders and managers, provide connections between divisions, and equip them to achieve and sustain success. Examples include:

* General Leadership & Management
* Meet the Administration
* Recruiting and Hiring New Employees
* Public Safety
* University History & Scavenger Hunt
* Campus Organizations & Employee Resources

The vast majority of university faculty and staff members are recruited and rewarded for their research, course development, and teaching or for their technical experience and expertise, not necessarily for their leadership potential. Developing managerial leaders willing and able to meet the challenges of contemporary academic life is of vital importance to accomplish and sustain institutional goals and objectives.

Resources Needed: Time, Program Development, Coaches/Trainers, Venue, Financing

Immediate Targets: Program development by end of fiscal year 2017.

Long-Range Targets: First group of participants to begin in fiscal year 2018.

Impacted Departments: All

**Strategy #3: Shifting the Paradigm**

Rationale: It is expected that a fundamental change in organizational decisions will occur once the values and beliefs of the campus community is defined and continually supported by leadership. In order to ensure the longevity of the change we need policy and procedure that is clearly aligned with strategic goals, are development based on a consistent foundations on which each critical decision can be made, and promotes campus connectivity.

**Action Step #1: TBD**

Purpose: TBD

**Task #1:** TBD

Explanation: TBD.

Resources Needed: Time

Immediate Targets: TBD

Long-Range Targets: TBD

Impacted Departments: All