**Table 5 Worksheet**

**Facilitator:** Megan Weatherly

**Proposal 5:** The “message” prospective and current students receive must more strongly emphasize academics as the core of the undergraduate experience.

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| 1. **What actions or changes are being proposed?**
2. We propose that delivering and demonstrating academic excellence be the primary focus of SFA’s branding campaign and marketing materials.
3. We propose that academic excellence be the primary focus of orientation.
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| 1. **In measurable terms, what is the goal of the action?**

The goals of these actions include:1. to engage students academically throughout their college experience as they progress to graduation;
2. to increase buy-in regarding the identity of SFA as an institution of academic excellence; and
3. to demonstrate within each college the quality of its programs.
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| 1. **On a practical level, how will this goal be accomplished?**
2. Item B1 will be accomplished by investing in professional development for faculty. Doing so not only keeps our faculty engaged as scholars in their field but also as educators serving our students. Additionally, this goal will be accomplished by improving facilities and equipment to ensure that they are, at minimum, on par with the facilities and equipment our students encounter in their secondary education.
3. Item B2 above will be accomplished by transparently aligning the budget priorities to the Strategic Plan’s Vision Statement and by directly communicating how budgetary decisions align with the Strategic Plan.
4. Item B3 will be accomplished by each college developing metrics by which to demonstrate the quality of its programs.
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| 1. **Where does this proposal fit in the Strategic Plan’s Vision Statement?**

We think that the above ties to all portions of the Vision Statement, as these recommendations address transformational experiences, student engagement, meaningful and sustained enrollment growth, strategic reallocation of resources, academic innovation, preparation of students for the 21st century, an engaged and collaborative campus culture, and a clear institutional identity as a place of academic excellence . |
| 1. **In what way will this improve the undergraduate experience?**

The above will improve the undergraduate experience by increasing our investment in our students, which will yield improvement of common metrics (e.g. retention rate, graduation rate, etc.) but will also better prepare our students to be productive, thoughtful contributors to society. The above will also contribute to improvements in our campus culture by fostering a growth mindset in students, faculty, and staff.  |
| 1. **What units within the university will participate in bringing about the change?**

All units will participate in bringing about this change. Those in Academic Affairs will continue to ensure the rigor of content and use of innovative instructional methods. Those in University Advancement will improve promotional materials and interactions to ensure that they include a primary focus on academics. Those in Finance & Administration will reallocate resources appropriately so as to better support academics. Those in Student Affairs will alter orientation so that there will be a primary emphasis on academic excellence by dedicating an increased and appropriate amount of time in the schedule to academics. |
| 1. **Who will oversee the action and be responsible for ensuring things are accomplished?**

The responsibility for overseeing these actions will fall to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. |
| 1. **What resources (i.e., money, staff, material) are needed to carry out these changes?**

The above items will require a thorough review of all university budgets and personnel per division/unit (Academic Affairs, University Affairs, University Advancement, Finance and Administration, Athletics, etc.) to support appropriate funding reallocations. The dedication of time to the review of programs and to the task of making appropriate changes/reallocations of resources and funding will be required. The less tangible resource of a commitment to shared and transparent governance is also necessary. |
| 1. **What might be a reasonable timeline for implementing these changes? (Be sure to include intermediate steps.)**

Immediately, all major marketing materials will be routed through Deans’ Council and other appropriate bodies early enough in the development process to allow for incorporation of input. Programmatic evaluation should begin immediately. In Summer 2017, the orientation schedule should be altered to reflect increased and appropriate amounts of time on academics and better convey to students/parents our institution’s focus on and dedication to academic excellence. By Summer 2018, orientation should be run through Academic Affairs. Additionally, the current marketing efforts should be adjusted immediately to focus primarily on academic excellence, notably by spotlighting high academic achievements of our current and former students. |