

**Strategic Planning Document Update  
April 2018**

**Priority 1: Enhance Institutional Capacity for sustainability and growth**

1.1 Financial Resources are to be allocated to academic and operational departments by increasing the use of independent, third party benchmarks and models to budget funds for strategic goals.

Evidence of a more strategic use of data is evidenced in the April reports to the Board of Trustees. One report demonstrating evidence is the Provost report addressing statistical data regarding academic programs. This produced comments from the Board of Trustees about the data and its impact in decision making. Finding third party benchmarks was included in establishing principles of academic health.

1.2 Align budgeting process to support planning for and achieving strategic priorities.

At the April Board of Trustees Meeting, target numbers for fall enrollment were confirmed along with targeted gift income. Overall enrollment is especially dependent on TUG enrollment numbers. For 2018-2019 TUG enrollment is targeted at 505 (fall) and 490 (spring). Other programs appear to be flat. While a new president may raise more gift revenue in time; for projection purposes, gift income remains flat.

Budget alignment also must be considered in light of an October 2017 Board Resolution (#16) which requires a balanced budget. This is accentuated by various lender covenants. With the Board Resolution and the target revenue numbers, Simpson anticipates revenue of approximately \$17.25 million for fiscal year 2018-2019. This suggests that the current anticipated operational budget for the same time frame must be reduced by approximately \$1.3 million.

At the direction of the Board of Trustees, the administration will initiate budget reductions during the first half of May in order to align revenue and projected spending. The Board recognized the need for this process to align with Strategic Planning Priorities and a set of principles to promote healthy higher education.

1.3 Influential and innovative marketing ideas to increase enrollment.

The Director Admissions proposed a 17 point plan for marketing & enrollment initiatives that are tied to the Strategic Plan. (APPENDIX I) This plan was presented at the April Board of Trustees meeting as a means of addressing innovation in marketing that should produce an enrollment uptick.

The Provost has been party to the new Memorandum of Understanding between the California Community Colleges and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities prompted by the state legislature to promote Associate Degree Transfers from community colleges to senior colleges like Simpson. This articulated relationship may enhance marketing and increase enrollment in specified traditional undergraduate programs or with the ASPIRE degree completion program.

#### 1.4 Create a culture of improvement and long-term development of staff by educational programs.

In April, the Accreditation Liaison Officer, and acting Chief Operating Officer attended the Academic Resource Conference sponsored by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). In the past 45 days or so, a music professor presented a musical composition at the West Coast Conference of the College Music Society at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. One Outdoor Leadership professor traveled to Denmark to present research at the University of Copenhagen. Another outdoor leadership professor traveled to Shanghai to make a presentation on experiential learning principles in camp programming. One member from History was at the American Historical Society and the American Society of Church History conferences in Washington, DC and presented at the Sixteen Century Society Conference in Milwaukee. A Psychology professor attended the Western Psychological Association conference in Portland, Oregon. Another social science professor presented a paper at the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, TN, and presented at the California Council on Teacher Education. Finally, our faculty representative for Athletics attended the NAIA Conference in Kansas City.

#### 1.5 Incorporate data driven methods to develop sustainable enrollment projections and matriculation.

Data was incorporated into the interim Provost's Board report to help initially quantify program health while faculty is still working on the Academic Program Prioritization that will be reported to the Board in October, 2018. The report provided an initial analysis of student-teacher ratios by program, size of majors, and other basic data points that will help academic leadership in addressing any down-sizing targeted from Strategic Plan Report Item 1.2.

#### 1.6 Meet unrestricted giving goals.

As we finish our fiscal year (May 2017 – April 2018), total donations were \$1,172,196.67. This is about \$100,000 under the goal, and it reflects about a \$100,000 shortfall from our Board of Trustees. This strategic priority has been highlighted for the incoming president.

### **Priority 2: Enhance Institutional Capacity for academic sustainability and innovation**

#### 2.1 Refresh and repackage academic programs.

Academic Programs continue to work on the Academic Program Prioritization project (Dickeson Model) through the spring and summer so that the finalized benchmarking report can go to the Administration in September and to the Board of Trustees in October, 2018. This will provide a framework on which programs can be refreshed and repackaged.

The Admissions Department and Marketing are also working on rebranding and marketing of programs in an attempt to reposition us in the marketplace.

#### 2.2 Expand emphasis and opportunities for student research.

The faculty committee who operates the Student Research Symposium has started meeting for planning purposes for the student research symposium event for March 2019.

### 2.3 Enhance a campus culture of scholarship.

Induction of over 40 student members into six honor societies took place in March/April on campus before the Commencement season. These honor societies are:

- Alpha Chi (University wide)
- Phi Alpha Theta (History)
- Psi Chi (Psychology)
- SALUTE National Veterans Honor Society
- Honor Society of Nursing
- Alpha Sigma Lambda (Adult Studies)

See also the statements in Priority 1.4 for a list of recent scholarly conference attended by faculty.

### 2.4 Establish general education/CORE department.

In light of current financial restrictions, the TUG Academic Council is planning to meet to discuss how we adjust our expectations for CORE for 2018-2019. More will be reported in May.

### 2.5 Center for Learning and Technology (CELT) improving educational technology.

CELT continues to provide faculty training and upgrades to the Moodle platform to enhance online experiences for students. As previously mentioned, training includes a monthly newsletter for faculty. The interim provost has been evaluating a proposal from the CELT office regarding how it can more effectively operate at Simpson University. The report was originally completed in December, 2017.

## **Priority 3: Develop a Campus Community that is Intentionally Diverse, Socially Aware, and Environmentally Engaged**

### 3.1 Achieve Hispanic serving institution designation.

The Admissions Department is exploring action steps to reach a more diverse student population, specifically the Hispanic population of Northern California. Pedro Martinez, the Director of Admissions is leading these initiatives.

### 3.2 Engage Simpson's constituencies and others in the question of how Christians should best respond on the most important cultural issues of the day.

The Commencement Speaker for April 2018 was State Senator Ted Gaines. In both addresses (morning commencement and afternoon commencement), the Senator clearly articulated some of the cultural issues and how Christians can respond in this culture. He spoke to the importance of faith-based higher education in the North State. His comments are posted on the University's website.

The campus faculty and administration were notified that Dr. Franklin Graham will be speaking in Shasta County on June 5 (at the Shasta County Fairgrounds in Anderson). The community is encouraged to support the community wide event as Dr. Graham speaks to important cultural issues of the day.

### 3.3 Strengthen the connection of the Veterans Success Center and veterans with the broader university campus.

Seniors were honored with veteran stoles for their graduation robes, and induction of the veterans' honor society helped to position our veterans within the broader campus community in terms of their scholarship. A Student Veterans Outreach trip took place by going to San Diego. The Success Center staff represented the broader university within the broader North State community at 5 additional events.

## **Priority 4: Strengthen the Simpson Student Experience that is Transformative and Holistic**

### 4.1 Identify signature co-curricular programs that will enhance SU distinctiveness.

Because of end of the year schedules, the meeting of the task force appointed last month was postponed until after school is out. The meeting will be in May.

### 4.2 Involvement of all TUG students in meaningful/educational service: World Serve missions trips, Strike Teams, leadership development, internships and service learning.

During Spring Break, two student teams traveled to serve. One team of nine traveled to Chicago to assist in an urban after-school program. The other team traveled to Lake County in Northern California to help local workers with rebuilding and recovery work following last fall's devastating fires. Seven other teams were in the final fund-raising phase of preparation before leaving in May for international sites. Additional information will be posted next month.

### 4.3 Expand the Academic Success Center into a "One Stop Shop" for all student service programs.

Discussions were moved to May pending ongoing evaluation of the concept against best practices. No doubt, budget discussions may also impact this project.

### 4.4 Increase the retention rate for all first-time, full-time freshmen to consistently be 80% or better by 2021.

Analysis of data shows that 2017 first year retention in general for the cohort that started 2016 was 68%. In looking at patterns, consistently over the past five years, out-of-state students seem to have a lower retention than in-state students. On campus students (more traditional aged undergraduates) had a lower retention than commuter students. Transfer students appear to be higher than first year retention rates. Interestingly, athletes had about the same retention rate as non-athletes. Perhaps the biggest variable, not currently analyzed is financial resources to continue education. The Dean of Students and his team are analyzing how to increase retention.

**POST-SCRIPT:**

The intent was for key administrators, faculty, and staff to update the Strategic Planning Document in May. With the news of a new president arriving June 1, and with the projected budget adjustments articulated by the April Board of Trustees meeting, it seems prudent to defer the revision of the Strategic Plan until early June. During May, the interim Provost and the Assessment Officer will begin working on suggested metrics that could be added to the next iteration of the Strategic Plan.

Also by way of clarification, the monthly report regarding the Strategic Plan is focused on the broad points within the plan, and it does not necessarily report all of the action steps within the plan. The purpose of the monthly report is to keep the plan before the community so that we stay focused on (1) Accomplishing our Institutional Learning Objectives (ILO), (2) Focusing on our Strategic Plan, and (3) Functioning with Healthy Expectations for Institutional Operations.