1. Guiding principles
2. Academic quality
3. Student engagement
4. Shared values

1. Guiding Principles

As the CSUN Planning Guide indicates, we follow five principles for planning:

- **academic quality**: we aim for excellence that is sustained by self-examination;
- **student engagement**: we work collaboratively to retain and graduate students by fostering social cohesion;
- **advancement and entrepreneurialism**: we identify and pursue opportunities to enhance the university’s resources in ways that support academic quality, student engagement, improved business processes and technology, and community alliances;
- **operational/business processes**: we strive for effective and efficient organizational and transactional practices;
- **shared values**: we not only value diversity, community alliances, and accessible services, but we act on those values.

Colleges must link priorities to budgeting such that calls against new funds, which are not tied to mandatory costs, are distinguishable from priorities that re-purpose resources. While no ratio can be fixed abstractly, planners should repurpose internal resources to reflect, in part, the results of assessment. Put simply: change does not always require new money.

**Additional Resources:**

Provost’s Views on Assessment
CSUN Assessment Web site
Report to the Chancellor’s Office on campus progress in implementing initiatives designed to improve graduation rates

The next three sections apply the five principles to Academic Affairs and outline the major elements of the annual planning summary form completed by the Colleges and the Library.
2. Academic quality

a) Assessment

This requires us to clarify learning objectives. Direct assessment then discloses the gap, if any, between learning objectives and achievements.

Explain the progress that the college has made—and will make—in assessment: setting benchmarks, assessing against them, using results, etc.

Additional Resource: Provost’s Views on Assessment

b) The Learning-Centered University

The last WASC Report and, since then, the President have focused the campus on becoming more learning-centered.

CSUN faculty and staff have developed pedagogies and learning objectives that take into account the different ways and paces by which students learn, as well as the different media and formats that suit different disciplines and levels of instruction. Recently, we have especially encouraged the replacement of seat time—hours as a measure of learning—with indices and supplementary experiences which allow students to proceed faster, if they can. Record the major ways in which the college has implemented—and will implement—several principles of a learning-centered and/or innovative university. Indicate, too, the extent to which funds have been redeployed to these ends.

c) Research and creative activity

CSUN recognizes the critical importance of research and creative activity as ends in themselves as well as a principal means to improve student learning and serve regional needs.

Undergraduate Studies and Graduate Studies, Research, and International Programs will prepare a Joint Report on Research on CSUN-funded projects, externally funded ones, and Center activities. The report also will recommend how best to exceed benchmarks.

Colleges and other units should report initiatives that will:

(1) “incentivize” research,
(2) require matches, in-kind support, or enhancements to facilities,
(3) respond to regional needs,
(4) revamp the delivery of the curriculum and/or the involvement of students as research/creative apprentices, and/or
(5) require reforms in RPT that, for instance, clarify the standards for early promotion and specify how alternatives to publication will be appraised.
Pay special attention to opportunities, through grants and contracts to enhance the General Fund support of units and the total compensation of faculty.

d) Ongoing programs

The major premise of this section is that program change builds on evidence: program reviews, direct assessment of student learning, scans of program needs, evaluation of scholarly/creative activity, scans of regional needs, and the regularization of learning-centered experiments and other innovations when evidence so justifies.

Now, with this evidence in mind, what changes do you anticipate? In particular, how will academic change entail more than growth? Will it entail experiential learning, reduce seat time, re-enforce GE, and/or respond to regional needs or accreditation reviews? Will it reflect an entrepreneurial direction to enhance General Fund and total compensation?

Additional Resources:

Provost’s Views on Assessment
CSUN Assessment Web site

3. Student engagement

As mentioned under Academic Quality, CSUN has committed to being learning-centered. This entails the understanding that not only is learning facilitated by experiences outside of class but that learning also occurs outside of academic settings

Reflect on how your unit will contribute to the CSUN effort to engage, retain, stimulate and graduate its students. Specifically, concentrate on plans to improve first to second year retention, reach out to K-12 pupils and teachers, make advising more consistent in practice and policy, and improve the support structures for students in courses with high failure rates. Finally, if pertinent, describe plans to mentor and channel undergraduates into post-baccalaureate study.
4. Shared values

CSUN has telegraphed publicly these values:

- respect for all people, manifested not just by equity in hiring and in treatment of students but by the inclusion of diverse perspectives in programs;
- alliances with regional communities, both to serve their needs and to benefit from their resources and advice;
- user-friendliness so that the public is not overwhelmed by complex policies and disparate offices;
- collaboration among ourselves to tackle complex problems;
- and improved communications so that departments are on message, messages are delivered in media that are reliable and publicized, and published materials—letters, newsletters, emails, etc.—are sequenced appropriately throughout the year.

Enumerate and explain your major projects. What philosophy—what thread—ties together these efforts? Indicate how they respond to assessment reports.