A. Planning overview:

The reason that we plan is to clarify our collective intentions for CSUN. We do so by evaluating the consequences of past actions and by projecting future trends and needs.

The timeline:

- **Spring to fall**: Administration and Finance (including Facilities and Human Resources), Advancement, Extended Learning, Academic Personnel, Institutional Research, GRIP/Undergraduate Studies prepare the contexts for program planning.

- **Late summer to fall**: the President issues the charge to the campus to plan, with a timeline. Typically this charge reflects the mission, vision, values, and presidential priorities, mediated by current events and the results of ongoing assessments.

- **Late fall and winter**: Divisions develop their strategic views for the next year. Reports should not exceed ten to fifteen pages.

- **Spring**: The Vice-Presidents, deans, and directors synthesize these views in consultation with the governance committees.

- **Early summer**: The President responds. Major differences, if any, are reconciled by the Cabinet.

Additional Resources:

CSUN’s [Mission, Vision, and Values](#) statement.
President’s [August 2001 Address](#) (outlines campus goals and initiatives).
[University Goals and Initiatives](#) outlined by the President in August 2001.
Provost’s Views on [Assessment](#).
B. Effective planning has these characteristics:

- multiple opportunities for operational and governance committees to question and revise assumptions, first, and to question and make recommendations about tactics and strategies, second;

- a connection between division plans and actions, on the one hand, and University priorities, on the other;

- the participation by stakeholders who are not inundated by reporting requirements;

- the use of evidence to explain plans—and the changes that they project. Evidence should be drawn primarily from responses to the indices and benchmarks—like the departments’ assessment reports, program reviews, and the CSU Accountability Reports—that already have been designed for that purpose. However, scans of the organization’s needs and of external influences are reasonable, as well;

- results that are reasonable, given the projected constraints of the CSU General Fund budget, changes in mandatory costs, and capital outlays for physical projects, etc. There must be clear linkage between priorities and budget requests. Divisions will submit requests/priorities primarily against the new funds that are not linked to mandatory costs. Requests/priorities that require divisional and/or university re-purposing of resources should indicate so.

Additional Resources:

University Goals and Initiatives outlined by the President in August 2001
Provost’s Views on Assessment
CSUN’s biennial Accountability Reports

C. Who plans?

- Colleges or equivalent units submit plans. They assign someone(s) to manage the process.

- A steering group—the dean and chairs, division management council, and/or a designated faculty and/or staff committees—must decide on the best way to gather information.

- The college or division consults with units like Advancement, the Library, Facilities, and ITR, etc. when their expertise and resources are inferred.

- The division’s plan has been reviewed by the highest-level committee that approves curriculum, budget, and/or programs in the college or equivalent division.
D. Guiding principles:

The President’s priorities condense the University Goals and Initiatives in Student Achievement; Campus Environment; Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity; Resources/Institutional Effectiveness; and Serving the External Community. These priorities identify the actions—(1) improving graduation rates, (2) connecting to the community, (3) becoming more user-friendly, (4) increasing non-General Fund resources, and (5) working as a team—for achieving the Mission, Vision, and Values of CSUN.

The President also has encouraged the campus to be more learning-centered; that is, to put into play strategies that account for the different ways that students develop, that separate seat time from academic credit, that improve programs through assessment, and that modify business practices so that students and others can understand them and exercise them.

The CSU requires measuring many of these actions against targets in the Accountability Report. And planning, assessment, and subsequent change conform to WASC’s model of continuous improvement.

All of this can be summed up in five principles for planning:

- **academic quality**: we aim for excellence that is sustained by self-examination (See LCU);
- **student engagement**: we work 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.

Each division will address the goals—and the criteria that follow—that are appropriate to it. Each division also must demonstrate how it assesses the effectiveness of its plans—and especially their impact on student learning and engagement. In turn, divisions will generate plans that are informed by previous assessment. Priorities must link to budgeting such that calls against new funds that are not linked to mandatory costs are distinguishable from priorities that re-purpose resources. While no ratio can be fixed abstractly, planners should demonstrate some repurposing of divisional resources to reflect, in part, the results of assessment. Change does not always require new money.

Additional Resources:

- CSUN’s [Mission, Vision, and Values](#) statement.
- [University Goals and Initiatives](#) outlined by the President in August 2001
- President’s August 2003 [Convocation Address](#) (further elaboration of priorities and call to become more learning-centered)
- Provost’s Spring 2005 Message focusing on the [Learning Centered University](#)
- The Learning Centered University (LCU) [Initiative](#)

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1 Academic is used in this context to refer to all curricular and co-curricular elements of the University as well as those in support of institutional functioning.
E. Planning inputs:

1. **Funding**: The major funding sources are:
   
   a. State funds that come to us in association with enrollment and, therefore, change as FTES changes (marginal funding dollars)
   b. funds that come to us one-time, through special CSU or CSUN initiatives
   c. funds that come to us through standing allocations, as through the Lottery
   d. funds that we re-purpose: salary savings through retirements, administrative efficiencies, curricular changes as examples
   e. funds that come to us through grants, contracts, fundraising, or other sources of revenue enhancement.

   Generally, (a) provides the largest source of funds.

2. **Enrollment**: We also plan on the assumption of FTES/HC that are developed by the Chancellor’s Office, but elaborated locally by Institutional Research in conjunction with other campus departments, administrators, and committees.

3. **Structure and Infrastructure**: We rely too on both Administration and Finance and ITR for an overview of facilities, services, and technology. Before the campus plans, it will receive scans from these areas on these and related topics.

4. **Entrepreneurialism**: Increasingly, we must be entrepreneurs. As a result, the divisions must integrate into their planning forecasts from Extended Learning, Advancement, GRIP, Human Resources, and Academic Personnel.

F. Process:

Guided by the University mission, values, and priorities, as charged by the President and summarized under D, each division will:

1. establish an annual planning timeline,
2. develop a planning template that aligns with the President’s charge and the principles, however nested, in D,
3. use assessment to support initiatives, basing change on evidence, and
4. link budget requests to priorities.