

PRESIDENT'S CABINET PLANNING RETREAT NOTES

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of our current planning process?

Feedback directly related to planning process

Plus	Delta
Issues focused on students integrated throughout document	Needs more of a student focus
Ed. Master Plan represented a collaborative, ground-up process	Need more data on non-traditional students
Desire to take action	Need better integration with specific departments
Organized and user friendly	No strategic plan
Strong participatory governance structure	Limited student voice and failure to integrate what they say
Transparent	Increase broad-based involvement of all faculty
Defined institutional priorities	Priorities not fully integrated
Creative use of existing resources	Need planning that addresses restricted space/lack of facilities
Desire to have students succeed	Mismatch between infrastructure and institutional priorities
Collective effort	Emergency planning
Do we want the instructional plan to be the strategic plan	Lack of effective tools to integrate community voice
Flexible and open	Lack of shared vision
Have a planning calendar	How do we measure
Pulls together a variety of plans/processes	Implementation
Centrality of program review	Why do we do what we do
	Missing key college functions (business, marketing, etc.)
	Classified – lack of understanding of roles
	What is the student and community role in process?
	Limited student voice
	Insufficient incorporation of community input
	Integration of planning deadlines with and around work cycle
	School goal-setting activities not linked to Educational Master Plan
	Lack of measurable indicators
	Few longitudinal studies

Additional feedback (important, but not necessarily related to actual planning process)

Plus	Delta
Props S and N	Lack of weekend/evening services
Cultural diversity	Limited resources
Research agenda	Lack of college visibility “signage” in the community
High caliber faculty	Creating silos through the use of small committees that don’t interact
Program review process	Not widely distributed or marketed to campus
Access to largest number of student regionally	
Mesa as college of choice	
Instructional component	

1. What are the three-to-five things (process) we should do to create the perfect strategic plan?

- Involve students, faculty, staff and community
- Make sure there is a clear definition of what strategic planning is and what the desired outcomes are
- Goals should be limited, prioritized, achievable, linked to budget
- Timely data should be used
- Identify necessary components to be used (timelines, resources, etc.)
- Create a new (streamlined and collaborative) strategic planning document
- Conduct a S.W.O.T./trend analysis and align current plans with data findings
- Integrate current planning documents and evaluate processes (how do we make it easy and familiar?)
- Include all components of the college (business, human resources, etc.)
- Use focus groups/town hall meetings to collect additional data

2. What are the five most critical elements that we should have in our strategic plan?

- All plans should support mission/vision/goals
- Reflect true engagement & support from all contingencies
- Reflect culture of evidence, in which data and research inform decision-making
- Smart goals: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound
- Measurable performance indicators
- Clear, concise and reviewed regularly
- Clarity and simplicity
- Integration of all services
- True engagement and ownership
- Data informs actions
- Culture of evidence
- All planning cyclical: continuous planning, implementation, assessment & review
- All plans should support the mission/vision/goals
- Strategic plan is overarching, inclusive and integrated
- Prioritize level of importance
- Framework for all planning (local and global)

Synthesis of Critical Information Related to Current and Future Planning

Our current planning process is represented in the Educational Master Plan. The work conducted to produce this plan embodies a collaborative and transparent process. Educational planning priorities were identified, various components of planning (program review, technology plan) were included, and creative strategies were identified to produce the plan in an environment of limited resources. The plan is well-organized, flexible, focused on student success and includes pertinent timelines. It is a good foundation upon which to enhance future planning.

While the Educational Master Plan represents a good start to planning, some opportunities for improvement were identified. Several groups acknowledged the need for more student and community involvement in the process and the collection of real-time data to support decision-making. It was noted that our current process is not comprehensive in the sense that it does not include all functions of the college; it fails to create a “big picture” approach to planning, with a shared vision focused on future aspirations. The identification and tracking of core indicators and the integration of priorities throughout the planning process would ensure greater clarity around vision and would enhance opportunities to make Mesa’s Strategic Plan a living document. Finally, lack of evidence exists to demonstrate that planning processes are evaluated regularly and results used for improvement.