

## Strategic Planning Process Background

William Rainey Harper College utilizes a broad, collaborative, community-based strategic planning process to ensure the College continues to meet the changing needs of our students and community. Harper College engages in frequent assessment of the students and the community we serve. Prior to development of the Strategic Plan, an Environmental Scan was completed. The results of this scan highlighted the demographic changes occurring in our district. In recent years, the district experienced a sizable decrease in household income and a notable increase in historically underrepresented populations. Additionally, these district changes were happening during a time of decreased state funding, local property tax caps, and shrinking high school graduation class sizes. It became clear that the College needed to engage in an extensive evaluation to inform development of a Strategic Plan that addressed a major change agenda. This would enable the College to produce higher levels of student achievement and increase student support, all while reprioritizing current resources.

The College utilized the following process to develop its community-based Strategic Plan with the guidance of the Strategic Planning and Accountability Committee (SPA), a shared governance committee. The process included:

- A broad-based assessment of the progress made and the challenges encountered in the previous Strategic Plan, and a review of community and student data.
- Four dialogue sessions to invite broad-based campus discussion on the issues facing the Institution. The dialogue sessions included presentations from industry experts, as well as expert panelists of Harper faculty and staff. Employee feedback was a critical component of these sessions and included discussion, input groups and survey opportunities. The four sessions included Harper's Changing District; Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT); Approaches to the Adult Market; and Student Engagement.
- A strategic planning conference for internal and external stakeholders with a goal of producing strategic directions and goal themes for the new strategic plan. The conference brought together educators, community and business leaders, and other strategic thinkers to help us define broad directions for the College and ensure alignment with community partners. Resource materials were provided for all conference attendees to ensure an understanding of the issues facing Harper College and its students. These resources highlighted best practices in higher education and community colleges as well as documented the results from the four dialogue sessions. Three Strategic Directions and five goal themes were identified during the conference.
- The three Strategic Directions and five goal themes were developed into statements and supporting paragraphs by the SPA Committee and its ad hoc work groups, after additional discourse with internal and external stakeholders.
- In fall 2015, the new Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees and implemented by the College.

## Strategic Planning Management Structure

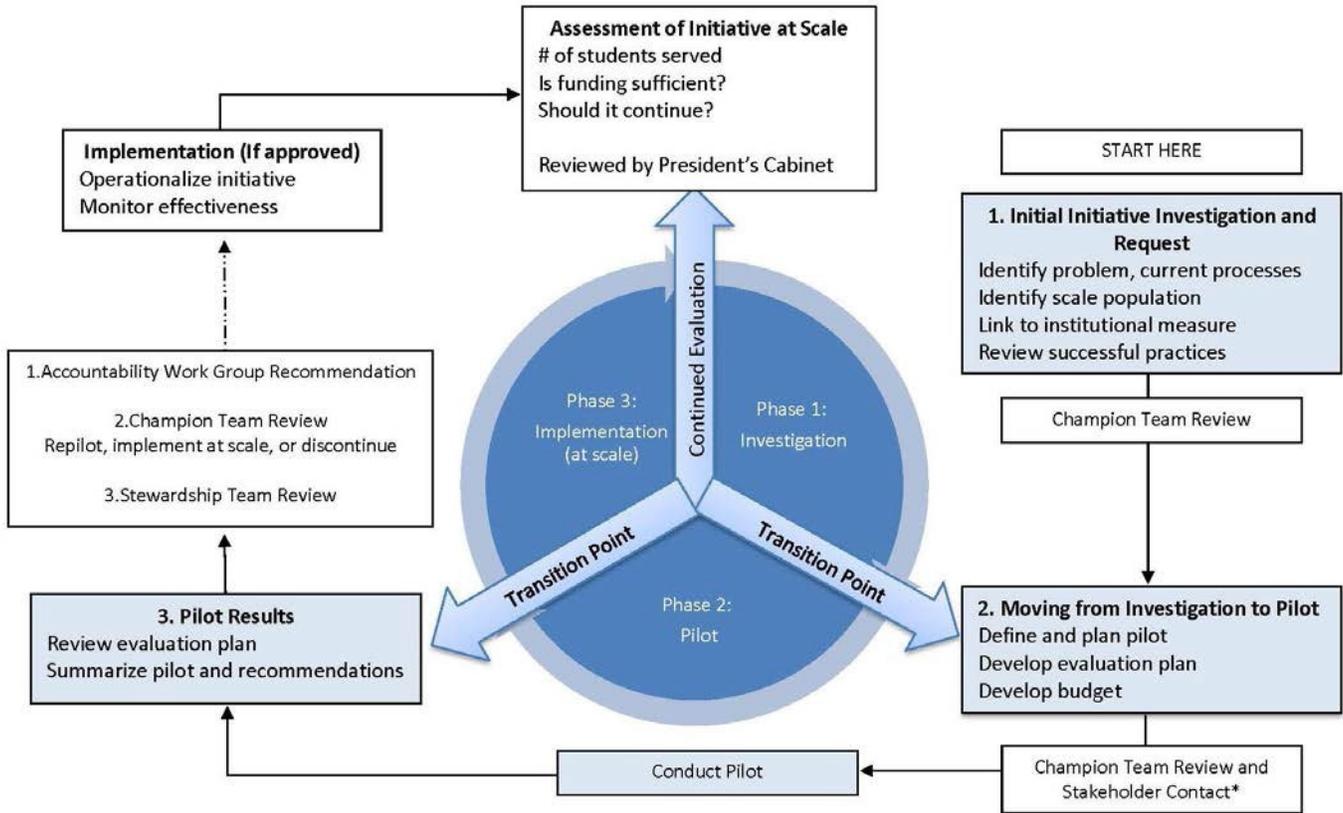
The FY2016-2019 Strategic Plan has several groups assigned to be responsible for advancing various planning elements. The roles and their functions are described below:

- **Champion Team:** Provides oversight for implementation of the Strategic Plan. The team is comprised of three administrative leaders and three faculty members. This team recommends actions to the College President, works to make certain that efforts across the plan are aligned, communicates planning information, sets outcomes, approves strategic planning initiatives and associated budgets, and reviews evaluation of initiatives to determine next steps.
- **Goal Team Leaders:** Provide oversight on all initiatives under a goal. Goal teams are co-led by an administrator and a faculty member. Their charge is to develop and meet specific outcomes utilizing proven policies and practices to ensure progress is being made against the strategic goals. Responsibilities include planning, evaluation, and budgeting. Goal Leaders also coordinate efforts across initiatives. Some of these teams provide college-wide coordination of activities, while other teams produce the goal outcomes through strategic initiatives. In some cases, the goal team can be responsible for both. Each team's goal statement, supporting paragraph, targets, and plans for FY2019 are listed on the pages that follow.
- **Strategic Initiatives Coordinating Council:** Responsible for college-wide coordination of initiatives. This council is charged with ensuring wide-reaching collaboration across the College in pursuit of its institutional initiatives and includes leadership from the Strategic Plan, Title III grant, Higher Learning Commission accreditation steering committee, Frontier Set Grant, and the College's Enrollment Management Task Force. These leaders work together to ensure broad communication and alignment of initiatives.

# Strategic Planning Student-Based Initiatives Model

Student success initiatives are incorporated within this structure and follow a three-step process, represented in the following diagram:

## Three-Phase Innovation Process 2016-2019



\*NOTE: Although the Champion Team will contact stakeholders as part of this review, the team may engage Shared Governance committees or other stakeholders at any point in the process, as appropriate.

Each initiative has an evaluation plan to address the outcomes, criteria for success and results. The evaluation plan is approved by both the Accountability Work Group and Champion Team prior to approval to pilot or process implementation. The evaluation plan includes the measures and data that are utilized to measure the initiative's effectiveness.

## Strategic Directions

The Strategic Directions and Supporting Paragraphs resulting from the Strategic Planning Conference and subsequent planning sessions are as follows:

### **Inclusion**

Foster an environment that values and respects each member of Harper's diverse community and actively encourages cross-cultural engagement.

#### Supporting Paragraph:

Harper is committed to a culturally responsive environment that makes all members of our community feel confident that the full extent of their humanity and contributions are recognized and honored. An environment that welcomes, values, and respects all members of the College's diverse community—across the spectrums of ability, academic preparedness, age, ethnicity, faith, gender expression, identities, race, and more—fosters a culture where all feel safe to participate, in open and respectful discourse, without fear of discrimination or marginalization.

### **Engagement**

Foster and support a culture of engagement throughout the College.

#### Supporting Paragraph:

Engagement refers to students' active participation in and out of the classroom and collective ownership of the learning process by students, faculty, staff, community partners, and residents. A "culture of engagement" expects and empowers everyone to take responsibility for building and maintaining positive connections throughout the Harper community. Harper College aims to achieve equity in engagement across all student groups according to their needs.

### **Achievement**

Enhance and support the academic environment in ways that lead to increased student achievement and facilitate greater equity of student success across demographic groups.

#### Supporting Paragraph:

Achievement comes in many forms (academic and personal) and directly refers to supporting an academic environment that leads to greater equity. The ultimate objective of the direction is to provide the type of academic environment that leads to student success and improves academic achievement across diverse communities of students. Diverse communities are defined in the Inclusion Strategic Direction and include spectrums of ability, academic preparedness, age, ethnicity, faith, gender expression, identities, race, and more.

## Strategic Goals

The Strategic Goals and Supporting Paragraphs resulting from the Strategic Planning Conference and subsequent planning sessions are as follows:

### **Achieving Educational Goals: Academic Planning and Pathways**

Establish practices that empower and support students in exploring and identifying academic options for effective planning and progress toward achieving their educational goals.

#### Supporting Paragraph:

At Harper College, this refers to developing and providing our students with forms of communication, information, and guidance to support them in effectively identifying and completing their educational goals. The intent of this goal is not to limit the educational options of our students, but to provide resources that contribute to students' progress toward their goals.

### **Alignment of Employee Skills with Strategic Directions**

Expand and support professional development opportunities to enhance employee knowledge and skills with respect to the strategic directions and goals.

#### Supporting Paragraph:

The enrichment of skills extends to all employees and includes the ability to pursue appropriate forms of relevant professional development. This goal places emphasis on inclusion for all employees, while promoting the acquisition of the knowledge and skills needed to support the College's strategic plan. There should be consideration for allocating sufficient financial resources in order to afford a variety of learning opportunities to engage in relevant professional development, and it should be recognized that Harper College is indeed fortunate to include unique employees with unique needs.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

Evaluate curriculum and assess outcomes to provide optimal and diverse educational opportunities for Harper students.

#### Supporting Paragraph:

Faculty-directed curriculum development and evaluation provide Harper College with enriching courses and programs of study. Continual evaluation at course and program levels maintains curriculum currency and relevance. Curriculum will continue to be evaluated with deliberation, care, and collaboration to ensure that it meets intended outcomes and evolving student, community, transfer, workforce, and global needs. Various forms of discipline-specific assessment at Harper College encourage reflection, responsiveness, and adjustment, toward helping all students master the knowledge and skills needed to achieve their educational goals.

**Stewardship**

Dedicate resources, both human and financial, to optimize student success, while remaining responsive to external trends and issues that have documented effects on the College.

Supporting Paragraph:

Harper's core mission is to responsibly serve students and the Harper community. Stewardship focuses on the dedication and allocation of resources that ensure Harper optimizes strategies that lead to student success while responding to external factors including but not limited to economic, regulatory, social, competitive, and technological, that have documented impact on the College. Resources are both human and financial and are dedicated by the College and external entities partnered or affiliated with the College.

**Student Experience**

Provide experiences that support the ongoing needs of our diverse student community through purposeful interactions and college-wide responsiveness to meet student goals.

Supporting Paragraph:

This goal encompasses the entire experience, from first contact to completion of goals, for all Harper College students. Regardless of their reasons for attending, all students will receive equitable and responsive support, both in and out of the classroom. All Harper College employees will provide experiences college-wide that engage all students as active partners in their success.

**Goal: Achieving Educational Goals: Academic Planning and Pathways**

Establish practices that empower and support students in exploring and identifying academic options for effective planning and progress toward achieving their educational goals.

Target	In Progress Needs Attention	In Progress On Target	Target Achieved
Implement Areas of Interest (AoI) by August 2017.			
Reduce the number of “undecided” students at time of application from 25% to 15% by fall 2018.			
Reduce the number of “undecided” students at time of registration from 8% to 5% by fall 2018.			
<b>In FY2019 the Academic Planning and Pathways team plans to:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement AoI Core Teams in August 2018, including election of team chairs.</li> <li>• Offer 46 First Year Seminar (FYS) sections in fall 2018 that are aligned with AoI, including ten “Focus on Your Future” sections for students who have selected an AoI but have not yet decided on a specific program within an AoI.</li> <li>• Continue to support integration of AoI in various areas across campus including in the application, New Student Orientation, and Advising and Counseling.</li> </ul>			

**Goal: Alignment of Employee Skills with Strategic Directions**

Expand and support professional development opportunities to enhance employee knowledge and skills with respect to the strategic directions and goals.

Target	In Progress Needs Attention	In Progress On Target	Target Achieved
Identify barriers to employee participation in professional development.			
Implement a process for scaling up employee skills in relation to other teams' initiatives by fall 2017.			
Increase the percent of employees who are satisfied with support, recognition, and value of professional development at Harper College by 5% from fall 2016 to fall 2019 (as measured by Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey items).			
Design an online dashboard to communicate professional development opportunities.			
Develop materials and resources to train employees on the Flight of the Hawks for greater awareness of roles in supporting students.			
<b>In FY2019 the Alignment of Employee Skills with Strategic Directions team plans to:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct survey to identify barriers related to employee participation in professional development in fall 2018.</li> <li>• Evaluate use of Professional Development Planning Form.</li> <li>• Pilot Professional Development Dashboard in select departments.</li> <li>• Develop resources for training new and existing employees regarding using Flight of the Hawks to improve the student experience and also educate employees on ways that they can support students by connecting them with available resources.</li> </ul>			

**Goal: Curriculum and Instruction**

Evaluate curriculum and assess outcomes to provide optimal and diverse educational opportunities for Harper students.

Target	In Progress Needs Attention	In Progress On Target	Target Achieved
Implement a process for quality assurance in online/blended courses.			
Provide a program to support faculty intervention in student course retention.			
Identify 2-3 high-impact teaching practices effective across disciplines.			
Implement course-level changes in select 0-15 courses.			
Implement Action Research professional development opportunities for faculty by June 2019.			
Implement Open Educational Resources (OER) pilot with at least ten faculty members by June 2019.			
<b>In FY2019 the Curriculum and Instruction team plans to:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Help One More Student Stay course retention project, including offering information sessions during fall orientation week.</li> <li>• Support implementation of course-level changes in English 101 Accelerated Learning Program and one additional 0-15 course.</li> <li>• Implement and evaluate Action Research professional development project with a focus on non-tenured faculty.</li> <li>• Establish a grant process for faculty who implement the Open Educational Resources student retention project.</li> </ul>			

**Goal: Stewardship**

Dedicate resources, both human and financial, to optimize student success, while remaining responsive to external trends and issues that have documented effects on the College.

Target	In Progress Needs Attention	In Progress On Target	Target Achieved
Develop a rubric to analyze the cost impacts of Strategic Plan initiatives.			
Analyze the impact of Strategic Plan initiatives based on cost per successful credit hour.			
<b>In FY2019 the Stewardship team plans to:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete second pilot of rubric by August 31, 2018.</li><li>• Analyze pilot results and submit to Accountability Work Group and Champion Team in fall 2018.</li><li>• Evaluate the impact of Strategic Plan initiatives as they are forwarded to the Stewardship Team for analysis.</li></ul>			

**Goal: Student Experience**

Provide experiences that support the ongoing needs of our diverse student community through purposeful interactions and college-wide responsiveness to meet student goals.

Target	In Progress Needs Attention	In Progress On Target	Target Achieved
Identify technology to streamline, prioritize, and redesign communication channels and centralize student engagement touchpoints by June 2017.			
Identify a Culture of Care Model for the College by December 2017.			
Create a visual Roadmap for all degree- and certificate-seeking students noting key student touchpoints with the institution from Day 1 through the end of the first term by June 2018.			
Evaluate texting as a tool to improve communications with students.			
Implement Culture of Care activities for students and employees by June 2019.			
<b>In FY2019 the Student Experience team plans to:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand texting pilot to determine how texting can be used to improve communications with students.</li><li>• Develop and implement Culture of Care branding for student events and professional development offerings.</li><li>• Implement and evaluate additional Culture of Care events and workshops throughout the academic year.</li><li>• Support engagement of students around the Areas of Interest during Welcome Back Week and at student club and organization meetings.</li><li>• Collaborate with the Employee Skills team to implement the Flight of the Hawks framework during the employee onboarding process.</li></ul>			