

## 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. In FY2014, the most recent 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 a broad based evaluation of our situation and craft 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 also determined this was an appropriate time to review our mission and vision statements.

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 who responded to the presentations. 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 that we are critically aligned with our 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.

- These strategic directions and 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**

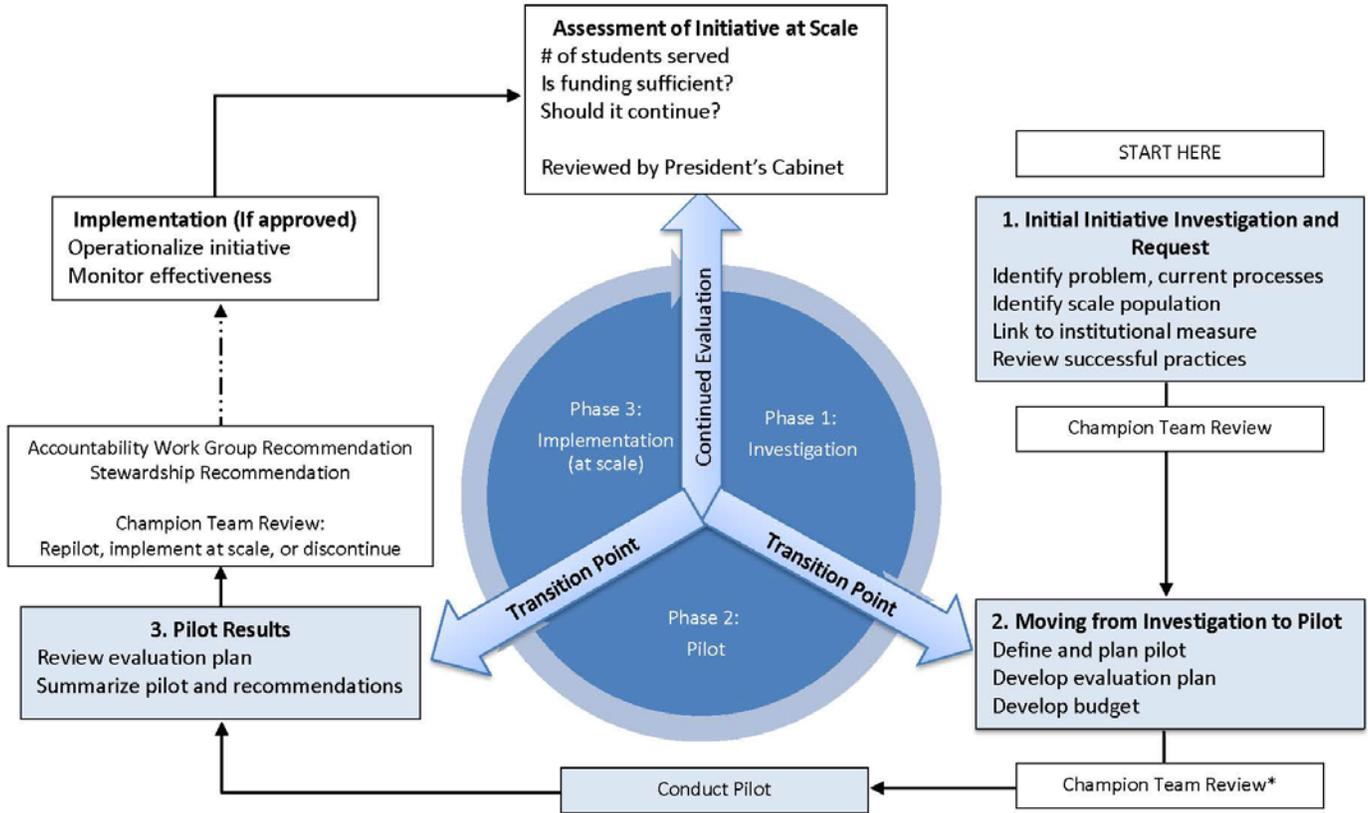
The 2016-2019 Strategic Plan has several groups assigned to be responsible for advancing various planning elements. The roles and their functions are described below:

- **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-lead 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, key metrics, and plans for FY2017 are provided in this document.
- **Strategy Team Leaders:** Responsible for implementing and evaluating initiatives. Strategy teams will be developed as needed by Goal Leaders and will be co-lead by an administrator and a faculty member.
- **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, 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 will be incorporated within this structure and follow a three-step process, represented in the following diagram:

### Three-Phase Innovation Process 2016-2019



\*NOTE: The Champion Team will contact stakeholders as part of this review. It is also advisable that the Goal/Strategy Teams consult with Shared Governance Committees or Work Groups that are aligned with the project.

Each of our piloting student success initiatives will have an evaluation plan to address the pilot outcomes, criteria for success and results. The evaluation plan will be approved by both the Accountability Work Group and Champion Team prior to approval to pilot. The evaluation plan will include the assessment measures and data that will be utilized to measure the initiative's effectiveness.

## **Harper College**

### **Mission Statement**

Harper College enriches its diverse communities by providing quality, affordable, and accessible education. Harper College, in collaboration with its partners, inspires the transformation of individual lives, the workforce, and society.

### **Philosophy Statement**

We, at Harper College, believe that our charge is to facilitate active learning and foster the knowledge, critical thinking and life/work skills required for participation in our global society. We work with our community partners to enrich the intellectual, cultural and economic fabric of our district. We believe that excellence in education must occur in an ethical climate of integrity and respect. We hold that the strength of our society is rooted in our diversity and that it is through synergy that we achieve excellence.

### **Core Values**

#### **INTEGRITY**

Result: An environment where relationships and practices are based on trust. Key Action: Be responsible and accountable for your own actions.

#### **RESPECT**

Result: Interactions which add dignity to ourselves, our relationships with others and our organization. Key Action: Value and celebrate the uniqueness of individuals.

#### **EXCELLENCE**

Result: Student, employee and organizational success through a creative and responsive work environment by exceeding the needs and expectations of all. Key Action: Effectively anticipate, identify and respond to learner, employee and organizational needs.

#### **COLLABORATION**

Result: Accomplishment of better results by working together than otherwise likely to occur by working alone. Key Action: Address issues as they arise and take necessary actions to productively resolve them.

## **Presidential Priorities**

In addition to our Strategic and Operational Plans, the President establishes his priorities. The current Presidential Priorities will be in effect through the end of FY2019.

- Ensure that all students pursuing a credential complete a first year class/experience that results in the development of an education and career plan that will guided them to completion.
- Develop a system where all students are assigned to a student advocate that will assist them in navigating their experience at Harper.
- Complete the refurbishment of the Canning Center, Building F and Building M, which represent the final three priorities established in the 2010 Campus Master Plan.
- Ensure that the Promise Program is fully funded at the \$10 million level established when the program was designed and executed.

In addition, the president and board are discussing pursuing the following joint goals:

- Maintain practices that assure a fund balance in the Tax-Capped Funds between 40% and 60% of the budgeted annual expenditures as a means of addressing unexpected revenue shortages and/or increases to expenditures.
- Ensure seamless leadership transitions as the President and other senior-level administrators retire from the College.

## Strategic Directions

The Strategic Direction themes resulting from the Strategic Planning Conference 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**

### **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 & 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 Team FY2017 Objectives

### **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.

In FY2017 the Academic Planning and Pathways team plans to:

- Determine, vet, and recommend implementation of meta-majors and associated programs.
- Improve intake process described in College Catalog and application.
- Determine the best methodology for ensuring Harper students have a clear vision of where they are going and why.

#### Key Metrics

- Advancement Rate (IEM)
- Enrollment Process
- Start Smart Completion
- Educational Plan Development

### **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.

In FY2017 the Alignment of Employee Skills with Strategic Directions team plans to:

- Develop a process for scaling up employee skills in relation to other teams' initiatives.
- Prepare the institution for receiving the other teams' initiatives.
- Generate ideas to support employees in incorporating the strategic directions of Inclusion, Engagement and Achievement into the overall work of the College.

#### Key Metric

- Culture of Professional Development

**Goal: Curriculum and Instruction**

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

In FY2017 the Curriculum and Instruction team plans to:

- Review best practices and current Harper practices related to improving course completion rates in gateway courses.
- Present results of best practices inquiry.
- Engage Harper faculty to elicit potential improvements in curriculum and instruction.

Key Metric

- Course-Level Completion Rates in Gateway Courses

**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.

In FY2017 the Stewardship team plans to:

- Fully develop measure or set of measures that will consider cost per success of initiatives.
- Develop rubrics that will be used to analyze spending on piloting initiatives.
- Assess rubric quality through examination of select 2010-15 Strategic Plan initiatives.

Key Metrics

- Cost per Credit Hour (IEM)
- Cost per Successful Credit Hour

**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.

In FY2017 the Student Experience team plans to:

- Create roadmap of Day 1 through end of fall term student milestones and experiences.
- Explore engagement in 2-way feedback with students (use of texting/messaging) and current use of texting between faculty and students.
- Define what the Harper experience looks like as it relates to delivery of services to our students.

Key Metrics

- Persistence Rate: Fall to Fall (IEM)
- Persistence Rate: Fall to Spring (IEM)