Unit Strategic Planning With Insight 2.0: Lesson 3: Mission and Objectives

In Lesson 3, you will learn how to use your mission statement and objectives to define what your organization should be accomplishing long-term. The first key question of strategic planning is, "What should we be doing?" A clear vision of that not only helps you guide your actions to accomplish what you set out to do but also steers your organization clear of projects that may be interesting but do not help you achieve your goals.

MISSION STATEMENT

Defining your mission is the most important part of the answer to "What should we be doing?"

An organizational mission statements is a concise description of the purpose for the unit. It explains what a unit seeks to accomplish, why it exists, how it contributes to the university and parent unit missions, and the ultimate result that is expected.

Institutional Effectiveness and Planning’s mission statement:

- Defines its purpose as managing UVU’s institutional planning and evaluation processes.
- Shows that it contributes to the UVU mission by supporting Operate Effectively Objective One (“UVU fosters a culture of planning, assessment, improvement and accountability”)
- Notes that these processes are necessary for the university to fulfill its mission.

Editing Missions in Insight 2.0

To edit your organization’s mission statement, click on the "Mission Statement" field to open the field:
then click on the "Edit" button on the right to edit the field.

This will open a text box in which you can type your mission statement.

When you are finished editing for the moment, click "Save."

Once your mission statement is final, check the "Mark as complete" box. This will help you track progress toward completing your strategic plan.

**OBJECTIVES**

To more easily achieve your mission, break it down into specific objectives. Strategic planning at UVU is operationally aimed at fulfilling an organization's objectives. Organizations typically have three to five objectives, but this is a rule of thumb and can vary with the needs of the organization.

Objectives delineate and operationalize the unit mission, manifesting those essential elements of the unit’s mission and collectively encompassing it.

- A unit doesn’t need to do anything other than fulfill its objectives to accomplish its mission.
- If it fails to fulfill any one it has not accomplished its mission.

In UVU’s planning framework, objectives do not refer to benchmark goals, strategies, or actions. They are long-term and ongoing states or conditions that define success, not something that can be checked off as permanently complete. Objectives are assessable by defining indicators that show progress; they are not the indicators themselves.

**Example: Good Objectives**

Institutional Effectiveness and Planning has defined its objectives to support mission fulfillment. IEP has four objectives:
For IEP to fulfill its mission, it needs to accomplish all four of these. Accomplishing other goals may be valuable but does not contribute to mission fulfillment.

**Example: Bad Objectives**
Poorly written objectives do not support mission fulfillment.

- Objective one sets a target that may not remain appropriate over the long term.
- Objective two will be completed in 2017, leaving IEP with no guidance after that (e.g., for supporting the NWCCU mid-cycle review).
- Objective three sounds fun but doesn't further IEP's mission.
- Objective four leaves organizations on their own to do planning and evaluation, leaving out an important part of IEP's mission.

**Editing Objectives in Insight 2.0**
Objectives consist of a name, a description, and a connection to one of the objectives for UVU's core themes or administrative imperatives.

The “Objective name” field is a brief reference for the objective. It will serve as the header in reports. “Objective” is the full description of the objective.

Edit these fields as you did the mission statement.

To add an additional objective, click the “Add new” box in the “Objective name” field.
Aligning Objectives in Insight 2.0
Strategic planning is designed in part to align unit plans with UVU's core themes and administrative imperatives. Unit objectives should identify at least one but no more than two supported UVU objectives. Explain the connection to the primary objective in the "Rationale" field.

The secondary objective is optional and no rationale is required for it.

Insight 2.0 may show more than one primary UVU objective field based on what your organization included in its 2015-16 strategic plan. Select the one UVU objective you believe is most closely connected to your objective and delete the rest. You can select one of the deleted fields as a secondary UVU objective.