

# 2020-21 Strategic Planning Guide and Instructions

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*Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Accreditation Support*

## STRATEGIC PLANNING AT UVU

Utah Valley University's planning process drives achievement of the university's mission as articulated and practiced in its values, action commitments, and objectives:

*Utah Valley University is an integrated university and community college that educates every student for success in work and life through excellence in engaged teaching, services, and scholarship.*

Student Success is the essence of UVU's mission and the focus of the mission statement. UVU fulfills its mission guided by three values—exceptional care, accountability, and results. These values govern what we think, what we say, and how we act across the action commitments. The action commitments—Include, Engage, and Achieve—identify thematic areas of activity that lead toward fulfillment of the mission. Objectives are specific actions that UVU will take to achieve its mission. Objectives are evaluated using indicators, measures, and benchmarks identified by the University Planning Advisory Committee (UPAC).

Planning at UVU is composed of a series of interconnected planning activities that ensure activities at all levels of the university support UVU's mission. Planning begins from the UVU mission, action commitments, objectives, and indicators. These establish the fundamental aims of the university as a whole and all of its individual units. The university identifies major strategic directions through long-term plans such as Vision 2030, which inform and guide unit strategic plans. These plans are put into action through resource allocation processes and routine operational efforts.

At the level of individual operating units (academic and administrative departments), UVU uses a four-year, rolling strategic planning process to communicate vision, set priorities, and focus efforts on fulfilling their own missions and that of the university. Units' missions and objectives describe what the unit will accomplish. Assessment allows units to understand the extent to which they are achieving their mission and objectives. Units use assessment to identify needs for strategic action, which will be pursued through quality improvement initiatives developed in response to key challenges or opportunities identified in the unit's assessment findings.

PBA requests allocate resources to support unit improvement efforts. Strategic plans are the primary means of supporting budget requests. President's Cabinet places funding priority on PBA requests aligned with strategic plan objectives and quality improvement initiatives; other executives and unit leaders should use unit strategic plans in prioritizing divisional and school or college PBA requests.

To guide operations and to facilitate the PBA process, strategic plans are required for all operating units at the director/department chair or above. For 2020-21, units should review, revise, and extend their four-year

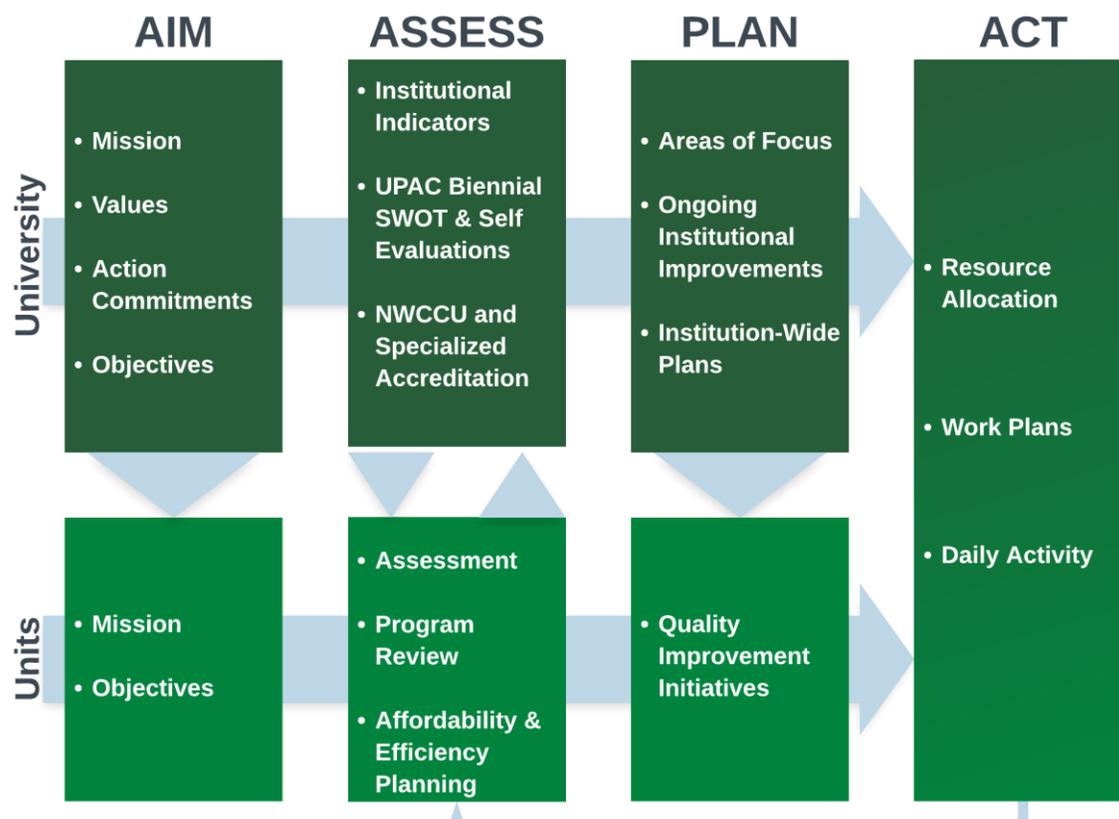


Figure 1: UVU's Planning Model

strategic plan any time between March and September. Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Accreditation Support will provide support, including training sessions, throughout the planning process. Updated plans must be complete by **Thursday, October 1, 2020**.

## PLANNING UNITS

Each unit of the university is strongly encouraged to maintain their own strategic plan. Units led by executives are required to have a plan. Executives' plans may be unified, encompassing all units reporting to them, or they may be federated, requiring that units reporting to them maintain their own plans separately. The latter is the preferred planning model, but the former may be used where closer coordination of offices is needed. Units that do not have their own plans must be addressed in the parent unit's plans.

### Planning Form Instructions

Provide the following information in the Planning Unit section.

- a) **Unit Name.** Identify the unit preparing the plan.
- b) **Included Subordinate Units.** Identify any other units to which this plan applies. Do not include units that prepare their own plans separately.

## MISSION

Strategic planning begins with the mission statement, a concise statement of purpose for the unit. It explains in just a few sentences what a unit seeks to accomplish (whether aspirational or practical), why it exists, how it contributes to the university and parent unit missions, and the ultimate result that is expected. The mission is in part inherent in the unit itself but must also reflect the unit's relationships to the missions of its parent units and the university. They should be developed in conversation with related units and reflect consensus among the unit, its parent units, and its reporting units. Mission statements are fairly stable over time but should be revisited periodically.

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### Planning Form Instructions

State the unit mission.

## OBJECTIVES

Objectives delineate and operationalize the unit mission, manifesting those essential elements of and collectively encompassing the unit's mission, toward which strategic planning is directed. Like UVU's action commitment objectives, unit objectives are long term and ongoing, rarely changing in the absence of a change in mission. All academic departments have an inherent objective of meeting program learning outcomes for all programs offered by the department, which should be addressed in the objectives.

Unit objectives are linked to the institutional action commitment objectives. Each objective must identify a primary UVU objective that it supports; units may identify one additional supported UVU objective. Occasionally a unit objective that is necessary for basic university operations may be so generally applicable that it does not apply to a specific action commitment objective. These objectives may be linked to "Operational Effectiveness Requirement" in the strategic plan. This should be used sparingly, only when the objective is a requirement of university operations.

Common ways to develop objectives include:

- Breaking down the mission statement into its component parts
- Identifying the conditions for mission fulfillment
- Defining missions for subordinate units
- Stating student learning outcomes

In most cases, units will combine more than one of these approaches. Choose an approach that makes sense given the unit's mission.

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### Planning Form Instructions

Provide the following information in the Planning Unit section. Complete the section below for each unit objective.

- a) **Objective Name.** Provide a short descriptive name for reference use.
- b) **Objective.** Describe the objective in detail.

- c) **Supported UVU Objectives.** Identify the institutional objectives from the action commitments that this unit objective most clearly and directly supports from the drop-down lists provided. Units should identify one primary objective and may optionally identify up to two additional objectives
- d) **Supported UVU Objective Rationale.** Describe how the unit objective supports the identified UVU objectives.

## ASSESSMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Unit should identify quantitative or qualitative indicators that help them understand whether they are meeting their objectives, These indicators can be combined with more holistic evaluations such as SWOT analyses, academic assessments, and program review to evaluate the extent to which units are sustainably fulfilling their missions, and to understand the internal and external conditions that influence mission fulfillment from the immediate past through the foreseeable future. Assessments form the basis for developing quality improvement initiatives for achieving objectives, as well as identifying objectives for which further efforts are not necessary. Assessment also identifies cost savings and reallocations achieved through prior planning activities. By maintaining assessment processes over multiple planning cycles, units develop long-term indicators of progress in fulfilling their missions.

### Indicators

Units should identify indicators for each of the objectives. The results of these indicators serve as the focus of quality improvement initiatives. Indicators describe a single method of evaluating achievement. It is possible to have multiple indicators for an objective, but recommended that units use as few as necessary to effectively determine whether the objective is being met. Units should use the indicators and measures collectively to determine whether it is meeting its individual objectives and fulfilling its mission as a whole.

### SWOT Analysis of Operating Environment

Analysis of the internal strengths and weaknesses of the unit and of external opportunities and threats (such as political or legal factors, social and economic conditions, and technological change) focuses on the effect these conditions have on mission fulfillment. These explain assessment results, identify changing circumstances to which the strategic plan must respond, and suggest potential initiatives for meeting objectives given the current operating environment. The SWOT Analysis should be discussed in the overall assessment findings as in most cases it relates to the mission as a whole rather than to an individual objective.

### Academic Assessment and Program Review

Similar to the self-evaluation, academic departments should use the results of course and program learning outcomes assessments and academic program review to evaluate whether they are fulfilling their academic missions. Academic assessment can be discussed in either the overall assessment findings if they relate to the mission as a whole, or as indicators for an individual objective if the unit maintains objectives specific to learning outcomes. Program review should be discussed in the overall assessment findings as in most cases it relates to the mission as a whole rather than to an individual objective.

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### Planning Form Instructions

Provide the following information in the Assessment section. Complete the section below for each assessment indicator.

- a) **Assessment indicator name.** Provide a short descriptive name for reference use.
- b) **Assessment indicator.** Describe the data to be collected and the method of collecting it. Include the actual results in the results field below.
- c) **Assessed Objective.** Identify the unit objective that the indicator assesses.
- d) **Rationale.** Describe how this indicator is a meaningful, assessable, and verifiable measure of achievement of the objective.
- e) **Threshold of objective achievement.** Describe what values of this indicator constitute acceptable achievement of the objective.
- f) **Data Year.** Identify the most recent year for which data is available.
- g) **Results.** Provide the data collected for the indicator, preferably a multi-year history.

If an indicator is not being assessed in the current year as part of a multi-year rotation of assessments, the data year should note the next scheduled collection year as well. Results should show the most recently collected data even if it was not collected in the current year.

## ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

Assessment findings should be summarized in a narrative identifying areas of success and areas that need improvement. Assessment analyzes indicators holistically to determine achievement of the objective. This narrative can thus consider other less formal or irregular measures of performance that provide information about achievement of objectives. These can include ad hoc reports, SWOT analyses, program reviews, etc. Additional information may be necessary to identify causes of success or failure.

This narrative should address all of the indicators, recognizing that success in higher education is complex and indicators may not provide consistent results. A strong narrative will account for the complexity of results rather than providing an absolute pass/fail evaluation. It will identify weaknesses as opportunities for improvement that can support PBA requests.

Overall mission and objective ratings support institutional evaluation processes. They are used in aggregate and are not designed to support program evaluation processes for individual programs. Each objective and the mission overall should be rated as:

- **Excellent.** The unit significantly exceeds the identified thresholds of achievement and other information available is consistent with an exemplary level of success.
- **Satisfactory.** The unit generally meets the identified thresholds of achievement; other information adds useful context to this conclusion but does not challenge it.
- **Unsatisfactory.** This unit is generally not meeting the identified thresholds of achievement or other information indicates significant weaknesses.

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## Planning Form Instructions

Provide the following information in the Assessment Findings section. Copy and paste the Objective Rating below for each objective.

- a) **Overall State of Achievement.** Describe the current overall state of achievement of the mission and all objectives collectively based on the assessment data identified above. Holistic evaluations such as SWOT analyses, academic assessments, and program reviews should be discussed summarily in this section as in most cases they relate to the mission as a whole rather than to an individual objective.
- b) **Mission Rating.** Select the appropriate rating from the drop-down menu.
- c) **Objective Rating.** Select the appropriate rating from the drop-down menu.

## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

Units should develop significant initiatives for improving achievement of the mission and objectives based on assessment findings. Quality improvement initiatives are developed in response to key challenges or opportunities identified through the unit's assessment processes and support achievement of the unit objectives. Quality improvement can be pursued in a variety of areas such as leadership, work process, student learning outcomes, resource efficiency, and other areas for improvement. Units should not attempt more than three initiatives at the same time.

### Rationales

Each initiative should be accompanied by a rationale describing the key challenge to be met or new opportunity to be pursued as identified in the assessment process. The rationale should make specific reference to an assessment finding regarding the objective supported.

### Goals

Units should determine goals to be pursued through the initiative. Goals for quality improvement initiatives are most likely to be achieved when they are "SMART": Specific, Measurable (quantitatively or qualitatively), Actionable, Realistic, and Timely.

### Resources

Current or needed resources to execute the initiative should be identified in the plan.

### Timeframe and Assessment Plan

Initiatives are, in most cases, multi-year projects expected to be completed within a three-to-five-year time frame, though they will not necessarily be implemented immediately (especially where implementation depends on allocation of resources from parent units or the institution). Initiatives should be reviewed and assessed annually, evaluating progress made and continued relevance given changes in the operating environment. The results of those assessments should be identified in the plan.

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## Planning Form Instructions

Provide the following information in the Quality Improvement Initiatives section. Complete the section below for each unit initiative.

- a) **Quality Improvement Initiative Name.** Provide a short descriptive name for reference.
- b) **Problem Statement.** Describe the challenge to be met or opportunity to be pursued as identified in the unit assessment process.
- c) **Initiative Description.** Describe the initiative in detail including the goals and expected outcomes of the initiative.
- d) **Rationale.** Describe how the initiative will support the unit objectives given the assessment findings.
- e) **Goals.** Describe the goals the unit will pursue through the initiative. Goals for quality improvement initiatives are most likely to be achieved when they are “SMART”: Specific, Measurable (quantitatively or qualitatively), Actionable, Realistic, and Timely.
- f) **Resources.** Describe current or needed resources to execute the initiative.
- g) **Initiative Begin Year.** Identify the academic or fiscal year (as appropriate to the unit) in which work will begin on the initiative.
- h) **Expected Initiative Completion Year.** Identify the academic or fiscal year (as appropriate to the unit) in which the initiative is expected to be concluded.
- i) **Action to Date.** Describe any action previously taken on the initiative.
- j) **Assessment Plan.** Describe how progress on initiative will be assessed, and the results of those assessments.

## AFFORDABILITY AND EFFICIENCY ACTIONS

While quality improvement initiatives form the basis of PBA requests, units should first consider whether their resource needs can be met through efficiencies within the unit. The UVU Strategic Planning Affordability and Efficiency Component has three objectives:

- Promote resource efficiency through expense management, strategic allocation of resources, minimizing direct costs to students, and identifying new resources;
- Direct resource efficiencies toward supporting affordability for UVU students and their families; and
- Ensure that resource efficiencies are consistent with the mission and action commitments, particularly upholding UVU’s commitment to access and quality.

The affordability and efficiency planning objectives may be pursued through a variety of actions. Units are encouraged to consider action in five areas as appropriate to their area of responsibility: (1) reallocation of resources toward action commitments or unit objectives; (2) student success; (3) support services; (4) facilities and infrastructure; and (5) enhanced revenue. Actions should demonstrate **enhanced affordability, enhanced efficiency, generated revenue, or strategic resource reallocation**. Units are encouraged to identify multiple affordability and efficiency actions.

The Affordability and Efficiency Component tracks four types of actions:

- Affordability actions reduce direct costs to students or time to completion, and is measured in cost per student.
- Efficiency actions generate cost savings for the operating unit, and is measured in total annual savings to the operating unit.
- Revenue generation actions generate new revenues for the operating unit without increasing direct costs to students, and is measured in total annual revenue to the operating unit generated by the action.
- Strategic resource reallocation actions redirect existing resources from activities that are not contributing to mission fulfillment or unit objectives to that that do.

Actions may involve more than one type of affordability and efficiency type, for instance when efficiencies in lab management allow a department to reduce lab fees for students.

Units can identify affordability and efficiency savings as sources of full or partial funding for new activities, eliminating the need for a PBA request or reducing the amount needed. Units doing so demonstrate fiscally responsible resource management, strengthening the case for the request.

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### Planning Form Instructions

Provide the following information in the Affordability and Efficiency section. Copy and paste the section below for each action.

- a) **Action Name.** Provide a brief descriptive name for reference.
- b) **Action Description.** Describe the action taken to enhance affordability and efficient use of resources in summary.
- c) **Action Area.** Identify the area of operations (as described above) for this action:
- d) **Revenue Generated (If applicable).** Revenue generation actions generate new revenues for the operating unit without increasing direct costs to students. Actions that generate revenue from other operating units or students are not revenue generation actions. If this action generates revenue, state the estimated annual revenue generated by the operating unit and university.
- e) **Affordability Savings (If applicable).** Affordability actions reduce direct costs to students by reducing course costs or time to completion. If this action enhances affordability, state the estimated reduction in cost per student and the estimated number of students affected per year.
- f) **Efficiency Savings (If applicable).** Efficiency actions generate cost savings for the operating unit and the university overall. Actions that pass costs on to other operating units or students are not affordability and efficiency actions. If this action enhances efficiency, state the estimated annual savings to the operating unit and university.
- g) **Resources Reallocated (If applicable).** Enter the total dollar amount of resources reallocated for this purpose. The total amount of all reallocations may not exceed the total amount of all efficiencies and revenue generated identified in the affordability and efficiency action section.

## VISION 2030 IMPLEMENTATION

In 2019, UVU adopted Vision 2030, a 10-year vision outlining how UVU's integrated dual mission will meet the higher education and workforce need of Utah County, UVU's service region, and the state of Utah. All organizations within UVU should consider how their strategic plans can address the three strategies in Vision 2030:

1. Achieve: Enhance student success and accelerate completion of meaningful credentials.
2. Include: Improve accessibility, flexibility, and affordability for all current and future UVU students.
3. Engage: Strengthen partnerships for community, workforce, and economic development.

include a brief narrative description of how their strategic plans support or implement Vision 2030. This information will be reported to the University Executive Council and the President's Cabinet.

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### Planning Form Instructions

Provide a brief narrative description of how their strategic plans support or implement Vision 2030 in the Vision 2030 Implementation section. This information will be aggregated and reported to the University Executive Council and the President's Cabinet.

## COVER PAGE

An online cover page should be submitted along with the strategic plan form. It includes basic information about the plan that is needed to support PBA requests, demonstrate fiscal responsibility to the Utah System of Higher Education and state legislators, and comply with accreditation standards. This information includes the unit objectives and supported university objectives; the assessment of the unit mission and objectives; affordability, efficiency, and reallocation savings, and a description of the plan's contribution to UVU Vision 2030. This online form replaces the previous PDF form.

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### Planning Form Instructions

Complete the online cover page by copying the required information from your strategic planning form to the Qualtrics form. A link to the online cover page can be found at <https://www.uvu.edu/insteffect/planning/strategic.html>.

## DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

Completed strategic plans are managed in Box, UVU's cloud-based document management system. The plan is stored in a folder called "Strategic Plan [Unit Name]" (e.g., "Strategic Plan Academic Affairs"). Unit leaders have access to their unit's planning folder and to the folders of all subordinate units. Those leaders can grant access to faculty and staff who contribute to managing their units' strategic plans at their discretion; it is not necessary to contact IEPA. Any person with access rights can organize the folder as needed to support the units strategic planning practices. Organizational leaders can rename or create new folders within their folder as needed to support organizational changes. Please follow the naming convention of "Strategic Plan [Unit Name]" (omitting the brackets). Share the folders with new leaders in Box. Please do not delete folders for units that no longer exist.

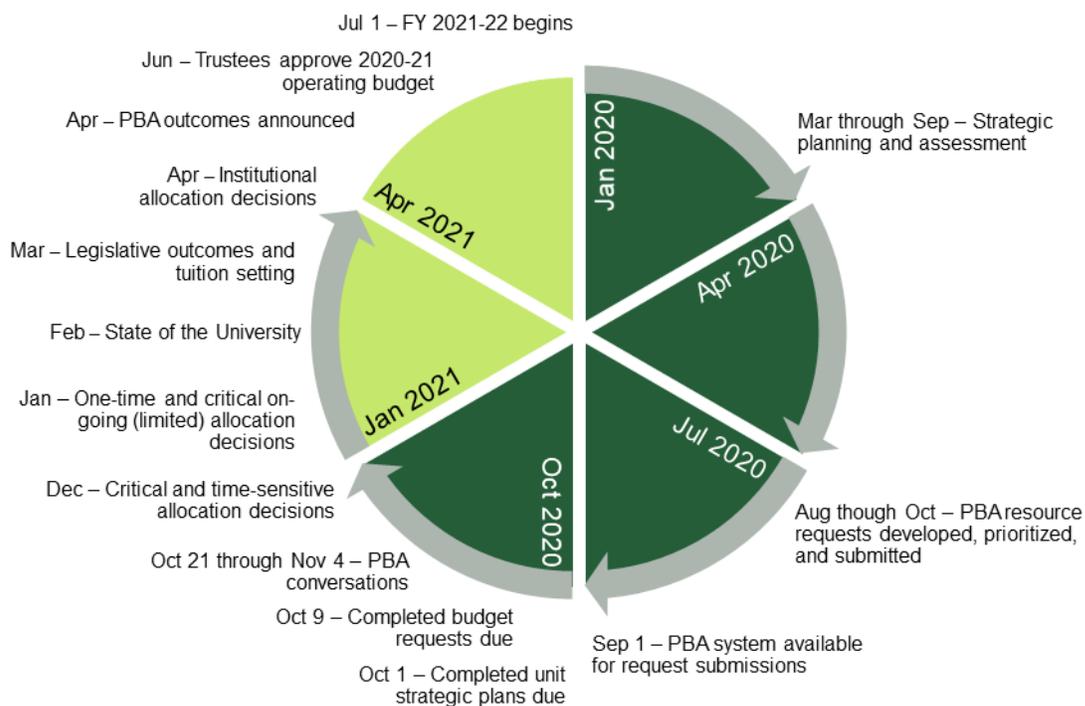
Access links and instructions for using UVU Box are available at <https://www.uvu.edu/itservices/catalog/cloud/box.html>.

## ANNUAL REVISION

Strategic Plans should not be re-written annually; they should build on the previous years' work to fulfill an ongoing mission and achieve long-term objectives. The mission and objectives should be reviewed periodically—less often than annually—but should only change when the unit's purpose or responsibilities substantively change. Similarly, Assessment indicators are most useful if they are used on a long-term basis. The indicators themselves do not need to be revised unless they are not providing meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data. Annual revision should focus on assessment data and conclusions, and on Quality Improvement Initiative progress.

## 2020-21 PLANNING TIMELINE

# 2020-21 Planning, Budget, and Assessment (PBA) Cycle



## Key Dates

Step	Dates
Units prepare their 2020-21 strategic plans by updating their 2019-20 plan	Now through October 1
Strategic planning and PBA training	September
PBA request system becomes available	September 1
<b>Strategic plans with affordability and efficiency component due</b>	<b>October 1</b>
<b>PBA requests due</b>	<b>October 9</b>
PBA conversations (Tentative)	October 21 – November 4