

**ACADEMIC PLAN**  
**for**  
**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO**

**I. Introduction and Goals for 2011**

It is imperative that the academic mission of the university be central to the next iteration of the strategic planning process. Yet, to date, we have not tackled the chore of putting to paper an Academic Plan and action steps to fulfill the plan. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs proposes a series of steps that will result in a comprehensive Academic Plan and asserts their centrality of the academic mission of California State University, Fresno.

This proposal is based on ongoing discussions with the faculty and administration in Academic Affairs. It tackles the chore of putting to paper what many of us have traditionally assumed our mission is at the university. Formalizing this plan provides a direction for academic affairs and outlines some exciting opportunities that result from having a common vision for the mission.

We can consider the goals of this plan best by considering what California State University, Fresno will look like if they are achieved. Selecting our campus centennial as our goal or target date, by 2011 we will have:

- Created a learning-centered environment of active learning by engaged students that provides an integrated approach to learning and development;
- Improved graduation and retention rates, each by 5 to 10 percentage points;
- Worked successfully with K-12 to reduce the need for remedial classes for new students by 20 percentage points;
- Reviewed and strengthened our Master's Degree programs, established a target or ideal ratio of graduate to undergraduate students in 2005-2006, increased the number of graduate students by at least 10% by 2011, and launched four doctoral programs;
- Significantly increased the number of our students who have had an international experience;
- Established our continuing ability to raise funds for Academic Affairs by means of successfully completing the Comprehensive Campaign;
- Reviewed faculty work and teaching loads, established internal practices for determining their equity, and attempted to lower overall average workload by one WTU;
- Strengthened faculty and staff professional development opportunities in order to increase adoption of effective teaching methods such as active learning, experiential and service learning, collaborative learning, and the effective use of technology in the classroom and curriculum;

- Developed the university's research infrastructure, focus and capabilities sufficiently to lay the groundwork for meeting the criteria for Carnegie Research Intensive status;
- Strengthened our research and sponsored programs capabilities by raising \$150 to \$250 million in sponsored projects and increased our indirect cost recovery by 5%;
- Expanded peer reviewed and refereed publications by 5 to 10% in volume by an expanded number and percentage of the faculty, gaining increased recognition for the scholarly productivity and supporting graduate and undergraduate research on our campus;
- Strengthened the collaboration between Academic and Student Affairs to provide an integrated learning environment and ensure that student success is the responsibility of all units on campus;
- Opened the new Madden Library, a community center for academic programs that provides for the intellectual, cultural and research needs of the university and the region;
- Created additional informal gathering spaces on campus for dialog and interaction among students, faculty, and staff;
- Advanced as a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University—Intensive institution with the special designation of Engaged Community Campus and established ourselves as a Premier, Regional Interactive and Engaged University;
- Increased percentage of faculty engaged in our region and gained national recognition as a public institution fully engaged academically and practically in the resolution of community challenges; and
- Once this Academic Plan is developed and endorsed, each School/College, Department, and unit will have implemented the goals, values and principles in support of the Academic Plan.

## **II: Core Values and Principles**

It is important to acknowledge the core values underpinning our academic programs so that we can align upon them, ensure that our programs reflect them, and work to hasten their emergence in our academic planning processes. The core values which have colored this proposal and form the bedrock of our academic programs and vision follow without regard to order of importance or significance. They include:

- inquiry, discovery, applied research, interaction, and excellence;
- high quality academic programs;
- learning-centered teaching focused upon student engagement and student success resulting in higher graduation and retention rates;
- a commitment to providing opportunities for social mobility for our students;
- a conviction that first-rate higher education must be based on a comprehensive foundation in the liberal arts and sciences delivered through a well-planned and well-executed General Education program;
- a celebration of a vital and diverse intellectual community;
- freedom of inquiry and independence of mind in the pursuit of knowledge;
- a concentration on public service and civic engagement;
- an educated and well prepared regional workforce contributing to the educational, social, economic, technological, and international objectives of the region, state and nation;
- a vibrant and active faculty who demonstrate an appropriate interplay of research, engagement, teaching, service and the use of technology;
- a culture of continuous improvement through assessment of work;
- a belief in the value of interdisciplinary and international scholarship;
- a focus upon ethical development for all members of the campus community; and
- professional development designed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

### III: Vision Statement and Academic Themes

Previous stages of the Strategic Planning processes generated a vision statement that defines our university as **the premier regional interactive university in the region, state and nation**. A lengthier mission statement, which was approved by the Academic Senate, can be located on the university website, as can the Plan for Excellence II, and the President's Statement on the university missions and goals. Recently, as representatives from our campus participated in the Making Place Matter process, several offered a more compact vision of our university's vision as being or becoming **an Engaged University**.

The campus has engaged in two strategic planning processes toward achieving its vision. In the first, planners developed over seventy priorities in support of the vision and, in the second, nearly forty priorities evolved. As we embark on a third round of Strategic Planning in 2005-2006, we should consider the admonition we received in our recent WASC Accreditation Review to:

- limit the number of priorities to a manageable number;
- focus on themes that can be understood in a straightforward manner; and
- consider combining all planning processes (WASC Recommendations, Comprehensive Campaign Themes, Strategic Planning, Academic Planning and others) in an integrated plan for the university.

Over the past three to four years, various members of the academic community have engaged in a thoughtful and deliberative process to develop themes that will shape the case statement for the Comprehensive Campaign. These same themes which focus upon broad aspects of quality, excellence, and the university's contribution to the region have emerged as potential themes for our strategic planning processes. The current draft statement of the Case for the Comprehensive Campaign sets forth a single overarching premise – **“Growing Excellence”** – a premise that boasts our accomplishments while asserting that all divisions of the university have additional room to expand and excel. Many of the core values listed in Section II relate directly to the general premise of **“Growing Excellence”** and support our intention that all activities in Academic Affairs and the university support the central theme of inspiring excellence and of offering a high quality academic experience for our students.

From this premise or overarching theme of academic excellence flow five Campaign themes that define broad areas through which the campus seeks to establish itself as a premier, regional, interactive university, and which give purpose to our academic programs:

- **Helping the Economy Grow**
- **Growing a Healthier Valley**
- **Educating Our Children**
- **Advancing World Class Agriculture**
- **Celebrating the Growing Arts and Cultures of the New California**

This proposal suggests that the overarching premise of “**Growing Excellence**” and the five themes that flow from it be embraced by the academic community as themes for our work. It suggests that “**Growing Excellence**,” the goals listed in Section II, and the core values listed in Section III be embraced by Academic Affairs as the vision for our work. Each academic program, center, or institute within Academic Affairs should be able to provide evidence that it supports one or more of these themes. The university should allocate resources to programs that support these themes and our core values as listed in Section II of the Academic Action Plan. For example, faculty in the fictional Department of Dentistry may provide excellent courses and conduct significant research in that area. While Dentistry is not specifically mentioned in the five themes, it would be clearly support the theme of growing a healthier valley.

In the upcoming years, the faculty and administration within schools, colleges, departments, programs, and units will be invited to consider how their programs support one, more than one, or all five of these themes and the core values listed in Section II. This academic discussion, held primarily at the school, college and departmental levels, will generate a great deal of thought and may generate conversations that will require some modifications and adjustments within academic programs. We should take bold steps to move forward with our vision. In the light of limited resources we should carefully examine the viability of our existing programs. For example, what is the viability of the fictitious program in advanced phrenology? Does this program serve the needs of the students and the university community and the region? Does it represent current scholarship?

If the faculty and administration see the need for changes or adjustments, plans should be made to implement them within the next two to three years. If the changes involve program discontinuance or the phasing out of an academic program, the proper processes outlined in the Academic Policy Manual should be followed. Should changes in staffing be necessary, the university community should make every effort to transition faculty and staff into new roles by planning well in advance for programmatic change. Generally speaking, the focus of this process should strengthen undergraduate and graduate programs in order to deliver on the mission of the university.

Casual or non-involved acceptance of the themes and core values listed above will not result in achieving the type of preeminence we desire for our campus. Instead, it will require a renewed focus upon excellence, interaction with our community, and the quality of student experience we provide. For our vision to be realized, the value of public service and civic engagement -- as well as increased focus on the student experience, student learning, and student success -- will need to be fully integrated into our curriculum. Our faculty and university will need to actively seek opportunities for multiple forms of engaged learning, such as service learning, internships, seminars, study abroad, field experiences and exposure to international issues. Academic excellence in all its forms will have to be pursued more broadly than ever in our campus history. If we can identify within ourselves that willingness and commitment to this pursuit, the university will make considerable progress in achieving its mission.

#### **IV: Thoughts and Implications for Academic Programs**

Beginning with the June 2006 Annual Reports, all units in Academic Affairs will be asked to reflect and report on how they are supporting the tenets of the Academic Plan, including how they are addressing the five themes and how they incorporate the core values in their programs. In addressing each, units should build on current strengths that support the themes and core values in the Academic Plan and should address the changing roles demanded of faculty in order to achieve the Academic Plan. It should be noted that the university is an evolving academic community and that we accept the evolution of programs and faculty roles as a natural process among and within institutions of higher education.

While Departments, schools, and Colleges should not be compromised in order to establish new programs, they should also be bold in identifying new areas of discovery, scholarship, engagement, and creativity essential for the continued academic development of the university. They should ask, for example, what new areas of scholarship have emerged in the last five to twenty years? Are they represented in our programs? Should they be? What programs should we offer that we do not? What programs are not consistent with the themes and core values? Should they be set aside or phased out? What programs are weaker or may be of less value than in previous times? Should these be deemphasized, set aside, reconfigured, or phased out?

Programs and initiatives that represent opportunities for “peaks of excellence” should be given special consideration. Given finite resources, we must focus investments and consider carefully how to best utilize our resources. It is not realistic to expect to achieve excellence in every aspect of each discipline. The campus should give special attention to programs with the potential to move the institution to national prominence in the decade ahead. Each School, College, and unit in Academic Affairs will be invited to engage in this process deliberating and determining the programs they believe that have established themselves on a national level, or that have the potential to do so, and identify those that are not pursuing national recognition at this time.

The faculty, staff and administration in Academic Affairs should encourage collaboration across organizational boundaries. Some of the most exciting scholarship today occurs at the boundaries between disciplines and programs, including the areas of student learning and student development. Recently released reports by ACT and AASCU reference importance of collaborations between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

Since prosperous regions rely heavily on universities to provide leading edge thinking, interaction, and technical applications for the industries in the region, we are charged by our region and state to think carefully about adding key academic programs and developing strategic centers and institutes. Via the Regional Jobs Initiatives, for example, our community is calling for collaboration from us, especially in the areas of Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Food Processing, Healthcare, Information Processing, Innovative Energy, Logistics and Distribution, Tourism, and Water Technology. In addition to these, we should consider interdisciplinary approaches and

entrepreneurial solutions to pressing regional issues such as water and air quality, poverty, public policy development, health and child welfare, professional personnel shortages and education.

Campus “centers of excellence,” which include many of our centers and institutes, combine and support faculty research and engagement activities and make them easily accessible to target industries. Take for example the International Center for Water Technology, the Central Valley Health Policy Institute, the proposed Advanced Manufacturing Center, and the Construction Center for Excellence and the Center for Food Nutrition and Innovation. Such centers and their staff are direct “bridges” into the region’s industries and offer the university to positively affect the quality of life in our region. They provide next generation thinking and technology solutions that help advance our region’s industry and make it more competitive. They also provide better information to the campus about current challenges and issues in industry and in the community, greatly enhancing academic programs and occasionally becoming a real focal point for research and creative activities (which can attract more external funding and further enhance academic programs). Therefore, our planning should also focus upon centers and institutes connected to target industries.

In addition to our focus on interaction and engagement with our region, Academic Affairs should address goals to significantly increase our students’ engagement with the world in which we live by increasing the number of our students who have had an international experience. National studies indicate that an experience in studying abroad results in very tangible outcomes. For example, the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program has reported that:

- 98% of students who return from an overseas study experience believe that the experience helped them understand their own culture better;
- 94% of returning students report that the study abroad experience helped them understand how to interact with those of another culture; and
- 86% of returnees renewed their commitment to learning another language.

In addition, returning students in the Lincoln Commission Study reported that the experience had a significant impact on them personally. For example, of the group surveyed:

- 98% felt that study abroad helped them mature as an individual;
- 96% felt that study abroad increased their personal self confidence;
- 89% believed that they were better able to tolerate ambiguity as a result of studying overseas;
- 76% reported that the experience influenced their career choices; and
- 62% reported that it ignited a new career interest that they actually pursued after graduation.

Many students at Fresno State report that the cost of studying abroad is prohibitive and, as a result, rarely seek information about various study abroad opportunities and almost never pursue possibilities for financial assistance. Nonetheless, a majority of our students would likely recognize the value of studying in another country and many would consider

doing so if scholarships were available. The California State University, our campus, and our sister campuses have many options for students to consider and these options could become a reality with as little as \$500 to \$5000 per student. If a Study Abroad Fund could be established from Instructionally Related Activities and other sources, our full time students could apply for assistance, significantly increasing the number of our students who would have to opportunity to engage in this form of learning. Such funding would assist us in expanding our awareness of international issues and would definitely benefit a larger number of students who currently can afford to study abroad.

All of these efforts must be placed within the context of our primary mission of providing an excellent liberal arts education to our students. This traditional form of education provides students with the basic intellectual tools to reach their life goals. Our students must be able to communicate effectively, evaluate information, and think logically whatever course of study they follow. Our core academic programs must provide the highest level of general education to all of our students to make them well rounded scholars and citizens. By including or infusing an emphasis on service learning and civic engagement, we will have developed an academic program that graduates of Fresno State with an excellent and well rounded foundation to become competent professionals, scholars, researchers, and stewards of our community.

In order to accomplish many of these objectives, we will need to enlist the support of alumni on advisory boards and in fundraising for academic programs, expand private support for academic initiatives, and expand funding of grant activity and sponsored programs. Additional activity will also require the expansion of space for faculty and staff to complete their work. The allocation of faculty positions and physical space by the Provost and Deans should be guided principally by their consistency with the themes and core values listed in this document.

## **V: A New Carnegie Classification**

### **Doctoral/Research - Intensive and Engaged Community**

For several years now, members of our campus community have been discussing whether we should pursue changing our current Carnegie classification from one of a general Comprehensive university to a new status of Doctoral/Research Intensive university. This proposal suggests that embracing a new Carnegie classification would support the theme of **“Growing Excellence,”** accelerate our commitment to continuous enhancement of academic quality, and support our core values as an institution.

Two common questions that arise when discussing whether our campus should pursue a new Carnegie classification are: what does it take to change Carnegie status? And why would we want to qualify for these classifications? First it should be noted that the Carnegie Foundation is currently redesigning all of its classifications for institutions of higher education. Announcements regarding these classifications and their new distinctions are expected in November 2005.

Based upon information found in the current Carnegie Foundation website, Doctoral/Research University—Intensive institutions “typically offer a wide range of baccalaureate programs, and they are committed to graduate education through the doctorate.” Further, institutions need to award “at least ten doctoral degrees per year across three or more disciplines, or at least 20 doctoral degrees per year overall.” While California State University, Fresno is nearing the basic requirement of granting 20 joint doctoral degrees in Educational Administration, we have yet to establish additional doctoral programs, to differentiate our graduate teaching workload, and to review and strengthen our master’s degree programs. Strengthening and amplifying research and adding doctoral programs will also require the development and expansion of the collection and services in the Henry Madden Library. In order for our university to reach Doctoral/Research – Intensive status, we will need to plan for incremental adjustments and expansion. Examples of those plans will be listed in Appendices I, II, and III.

In addition, the Carnegie Foundation is currently considering the development of a new elective classification for Community Engagement. The Foundation defines Community Engagement as “the exchange of knowledge and resources between higher education institutions and their larger communities for mutual benefit, in a context of partnership and reciprocity.” The Foundation is working with thirteen universities to develop a set of indicators, a classification framework, and a pilot implementation plan. An announcement with additional information is expected in late 2005 or early 2006. Given our impressive accomplishments in Service Learning, Civic Engagement, internships, applied research, and community learning projects, and given our well established commitment to serving our region, this classification appears to be fitting and an appropriate acknowledgement of our efforts.

Achieving the Doctoral/Research – Intensive classification will contribute to faculty and student intellectual vitality in several ways. Striving to achieve this classification will

require the development of advanced programs and research that stimulates and enhances teaching and learning and will maintain a constant focus upon building high quality academic programs. It will offer students additional opportunities for engaged learning. Expanded grant and contract activity that accompanies advanced programs and research can provide resources for programs, provide backfill for faculty release time, and allow for much needed equipment purchases and laboratory enhancements. Additional grant and research activity aimed at Doctoral/Research – Intensive status can also provide travel support, enhance programs, expand opportunities for collaborative research, and highlight university capacities that make us more attractive to prospective donors.

Further, Doctoral-Research – Intensive status will assist us in successfully applying for external funding to support research, innovative program development, graduate student and post-graduate training opportunities and a host of collaborative projects. These projects will address pressing regional needs that we do not currently provide, such as addressing factors contributing to the general quality of life in our region, as well as retaining some excellent graduate students for further study in our region. In addition, the increase in professional and joint doctoral programs will offer our region professional degrees to enhance and support industry in the San Joaquin Valley.

Pursuing the soon-to-be-announced Engaged University status will serve as an affirmation of our strong stand for engaged learning and for partnering with the citizens of our region. Strengthening our current commitments and excellence in service learning, community-based research, professional service and other forms of civic engagement will strengthen other areas of scholarship, service, teaching and student development. In short, achieving both classifications will enhance our university status within the academic and general community, provide us with additional opportunities for grant and research activities, better serve our region, and enhance the our academic programs.

It should be noted that achieving Carnegie Doctoral/Research – Intensive status as an Engaged University does not mean that every department, school or college will be required to develop a doctoral program, or that every school and college will be affected by the new status in the same ways. Nor does it mean that support for existing undergraduate programs of high quality will be withdrawn. Instead, the intention is to enhance and lift the quality of all academic programs. Moving to the new status, aligning upon core values and central themes will assist all departments in many of the areas discussed in this section. In addition, should we achieve this classification, California State University, Fresno will be the only Doctoral Research – Intensive between the Lo Angeles basin and San Francisco. We will also be one of the very few institutions with the Engaged University status in California.

Finally, achieving the status of a Carnegie Doctoral Intensive institution as an Engaged University should not be seen as an isolated end or goal. Instead, it should be held as a means of expressing a commitment to reasoned growth in research, scholarship, engagement, and creative activity. This will entail developing a limited number of doctoral programs that build upon our academic strengths and address the needs of the

region we serve. At the same time, an increased emphasis on scholarship across the disciplines will enhance opportunities for master's level and undergraduate students.

## **VI: A Comment on Faculty Workload Credit and Graduate Programs**

In order for the initiatives in this document to be successful, there are several issues that need to be explored regarding faculty teaching and work load. While faculty teaching and work load is likely the highest cause for faculty concern on our campus, we know relatively little about it. That is, there are several regularly prepared reports that measure faculty loads but, because they are derived from different data bases, they do not concur. As a result, the Provost has asked the Associate Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs, the Budget Officer, the Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Personnel, and the Director of Institutional Research to research faculty teaching and work load credits, determine the origin of the inconsistencies in these reporting methodologies, and provide a report for the campus community so that we may all have common information to consider when we are exploring options for future teaching and work load distribution. They have also been asked to review the relative numbers of students instructed in undergraduate and graduate courses, as well as the distribution of assigned time to determine the manner and purposes for which it is being distributed so that we may discuss whether it is aligned with our goals.

One study of workload credit conducted a few years ago indicated that the full-time faculty's workload was 10.1 weighted teaching units (WTUs) per term. Such accommodation of faculty workload allows for increased engagement in research, grant activity, service, and program development. As we shift toward an increased research orientation in certain areas of the university, we expect that faculty workload in select areas will be accommodated. In short, faculty instructional loads will likely vary based on specific assignment and activities.

The purpose of gathering additional information on faculty instructional load is multifaceted. First, we need to establish a common understanding of what currently constitutes faculty work before we can determine whether we might be able to rectify any possible inequities and how we might align work and teaching loads with future goals. Also, certified data will assist us in engaging in long-term planning for projected faculty shortages and assess our ability to recruit and successfully retain faculty members. It should be noted that these discussions will take place within the confines of state and system regulations and our Collective Bargaining Agreement that both graduate and undergraduate teaching and work loads will be reviewed.

In response to our specific plans to enhance our graduate programs, the Provost has requested that each Dean with graduate programs dedicate additional resources to their graduate programs in 2005-2006. In addition, the State of California Office of Finance is considering a request from the California State University for permission to fund graduate education at a 12- rather than 15-unit weighted teaching load. Should this

initiative receive approval, our campus will be able to dedicate these funds toward our graduate programs, specifically through strengthening existing graduate programs and differentiating graduate teaching loads.

## **VII: A Comment regarding Our Students**

In recent years, our campus has achieved remarkable diversity in its student body, has increased graduation and retention rates, and has demonstrated its commitment to student success in many ways. As we learned in our recent WASC review, our achievements have not gone unnoticed and are the envy of many universities. We have invested in building a vibrant faculty to work with students, construct programs to support their education, and develop facilities and partnerships to maximize the quality of their educational experiences.

In reviewing our accomplishments to date and in consideration of the goals, themes and core values outlined in this document, it is timely to concentrate and focus upon additional factors that will contribute to our goals and to student success. Those include significantly reducing the number and percentage of students requiring remediation in English and Mathematics before they enter the university. In recent years, approximately 55% of our entering students have required some form of remediation. If we successfully partner with local high schools and selected Student Affairs programs to encourage students to enroll in the testing services offered through the Education Assessment Programs and if we develop programs to encourage students to fulfill their requirements in their senior year of high school or in the summer before entering college, we can accomplish a 20% reduction in the next five years.

In addition, several efforts launched by the Student Success Task Force show great promise for increasing our university's retention and graduation rates. Members of the Task force reflect collaborations across organizational boundaries through representation from Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, and Student Affairs. Several efforts are contributing to increased retention and graduation rates, such as: restructuring and re-launching the Mentoring Institute, developing freshman learning communities, enforcing requirements that students see an adviser at least once before the close of their junior year, requiring that students declare a major before reaching their junior year, requiring attendance at "Dog Days" Orientation, and launching interactive Roadmaps. These efforts should be continued and, as they are instituted, additional efforts should be made to support our students in moving through their university experience successfully.

Another student-related issue that should be addressed is determining the ideal mix of undergraduate and graduate students as we strengthen our master's degree programs and add doctoral programs. Graduate and post-baccalaureate students have been declining as a percentage of the total student body in recent years. As part of the Academic Plan, it is recommended that we establish a target or ideal ratio of graduate to undergraduate students in the upcoming year and that we, as a minimum, increase our graduate and post-baccalaureate student population by 10% by 2011. As suggested earlier in this

document, there are resource implications in how we develop our graduate programs in relationship to our undergraduate programs. In addition to funding generated through FTES, and the potential of differentiated FTEs for graduate programs, we need to consider alternative funding models, such as self-support and differential fees, to attain our goals for distinction.

### **VIII: Action Steps and Planning**

The proposed Academic Plan supports the broad university vision statement, embraces our core values and serves the five academic themes. It focuses on themes and values that are to be emphasized as central to effective teaching, learning, research, and engagement. In order to achieve our goals, Academic Affairs will have to plan strategically and develop annual action steps. Those plans will contain annual “what we plan to accomplish by when” goals that will follow in the appendices of this document. Appendix I outlines specific action steps to be initiated in 2005-2006, Appendix II for 2006-2007, and Appendix III for 2007-2008.

Both the Action Plan (this document) and the action steps in the Appendices will appear on the Provost’s website in draft form throughout fall term. At the close of the term, a final document will be presented to the university campus for consideration in the Strategic Planning process. The Appendices will be revised, updated, and adjusted annually as we make progress toward our goals.

### **IX: Conclusion**

If the goals, core values, and action items outlined in this document and in its appendices are successfully enacted, and thoughtfully revised and developed over the next five or six years, by 2011, the University will have emerged even more clearly as a premier, regional interactive university, and as an engaged university. The university will look and feel differently than it does today and it will be evident to our community that we have become a fully engaged university. Academic Affairs will have played a major role in this process and will have worked cooperatively with the other units on campus to achieve this unity of purpose. In addition, Academic Affairs will have worked closely with our colleagues in Administrative Affairs to develop a campus Master Plan in which “buildings follow academic programs.” Our students will have benefited from our focus on their learning in ways that are difficult to predict today. One thing that is predictable, however, is that they are likely to be our best advocates in the future, as they go out to contribute to the future of our community, nation and world.

### **X: Next Steps**

Throughout the summer and early fall, several individuals have generously offered suggestions that are included in this document. In presenting this draft document to the faculty and to the university community, the Provost has invited and continues to request thoughtful suggestions to be considered for inclusion in future drafts of the Academic Plan. Those recommendations may be addressed to the Provost via email or written form and invitations for presentations and discussion will also be accepted. Depending upon the volume of response to the document, a small writing team might be recruited to consider additions, deletions, and suggestions. In early October, the document was presented to the Strategic Planning Committee and their suggestions have been included in this version of the Academic Plan.

Once review of the Academic Plan has been completed, Deans, Department Chairs and faculty in Academic Affairs will be invited to participate in the development of Appendices I, II, and III. It is anticipated that the development of the appendices will be a dynamic and evolving process, and that they may be revised annually.