University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Academic Strategic Plan

2007

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University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

OVERVIEW

UCCS has been involved over the past two years in a process to update the Academic Strategic (Master) Plan. The previous Academic Master Plan (for 1999-2004, updated in 2001) was scheduled to be brought up to date earlier, but was put on hold due to the financial exigencies in the state. However, in May 2005, the campus adopted, and the Board of Regents approved, the "Seven-Year Growth Plan," a guide for comprehensive funding as a part of the strategy to increase overall enrollment to more than 9,000 students by the year 2012.

In AY 2005-2006, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) assembled an Academic Strategic Plan Steering Committee to guide the development of the plan. The steering committee, chaired by the VCAA, was formed with broad input from the academic community and staff and student groups. The committee hosted a series of "campus conversations," open discussion sessions that gave the campus community several opportunities to share with the committee their views on three questions: (1) What new academic programs and initiatives should UCCS create and why; (2) What existing academic programs should be enhanced or re-directed to better meet regional, state and national needs; and (3) In what ways can university-community partnerships be strengthened and enhanced? The steering committee also sought input from member of the community through the University Club and the Chancellor's Roundtable.

The Academic Strategic Plan Steering Committee reaffirmed the campus vision and values and created a set of principles for strengthening UCCS' academic programs and for the approval of new academic degrees and programs. The committee named several potential new programs (previously noted in the Seven-Year Growth Plan) as examples. Several of those programs have already come to the Regents for approval: the BA in Criminal Justice, the Bachelor of Innovation family of degrees, the DNP (Doctorate in Nursing Practice), and the PhD in Educational Leadership.

In AY 2006-2007, the Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, working with the Deans Council and the Faculty Assembly, began the process of determining goals and strategies to implement the principles formulated the previous year. A series of four goals have been formulated, with strategies to meet them:

- Guarantee a quality comprehensive educational experience that prepares students to excel personally, professionally, and as global citizens;
- Invest in responsible growth of research, scholarship, and creative work that serve the campus and the public good;
- Integrate the roles of teaching, research, and service in the academic lives of faculty;
- Nurture innovation and entrepreneurship in support of campus, college, and university success.

The goals, with strategies and tactics, are detailed in this plan.

Vision and Mission of UCCS

A fundamental premise of this plan is that academic programming will be true to our vision and mission. These are:

VISION: The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs will provide unsurpassed, student-centered teaching and learning, and outstanding research and creative work that serve our community, state and nation, and result in our recognition as the premier comprehensive, regional research university in the United States.

MISSION: The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs shall be a comprehensive baccalaureate university with selective admissions standards. The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs shall offer liberal arts and sciences, business, engineering, health sciences and teacher preparation undergraduate degrees and a selected number of masters and doctoral degree programs.

Core Values:

- *Excellence*: We will attract, develop and retain outstanding faculty, staff and students, and focus on those programs and services that we can offer at an exemplary level.
- *Student Success*: We will help traditional and non-traditional students succeed in their academic endeavors by assuring a stimulating, supportive and safe environment in a naturally beautiful setting. We will encourage students to recognize their responsibility to participate fully in their own educational success and to contribute to the quality of all aspects of campus life.
- *Community Interactions*: We will make known our vision, values and goals and provide a demonstrated return on investment to the citizens of Colorado. We will link the university more closely to the communities we serve. We will communicate the value of the university to the citizens and elected leaders of our state, alumni, and potential students everywhere.
- *Enriching Environment*: We will aggressively seek the development of a multicultural campus environment in which each person contributes unique talents to make the university a better place. In turn, each person will be fully valued and supported. We will reaffirm the tradition of shared governance and encourage all members of our campus community to join together in creating a positive working environment where all enjoy respect, fair treatment, and a voice in campus decisions.
- *Quality Teaching*: We will promote and reward teaching excellence. We will strive to maintain predominantly small classes taught by dedicated and accessible faculty.
- *Research and Creative Work*: We will promote and reward research and creative work that advances knowledge that makes a valuable contribution, that enhances our teaching and service missions, and that encourages collaboration between students, both graduate and undergraduate, and faculty.
- *Service*: We will attract and reward members of the campus community who place a high value on service and who are committed to contributing their expertise to the university and the public good.
- *Staff Contribution*: We will value the vital role that staff play in supporting and enhancing the mission of the university.
- *Innovation and Change*: We believe that universities both preserve the past and help create the future. We will encourage innovation in teaching, research, and service and prepare our students to succeed in a rapidly changing global and technologically advancing environment.
- *Life-long Learning*: We will commit to serving the educational needs of members of our community at many points along life's path---as K-12 students, as university students, as they enter the workforce, as they retrain for new careers, and as they continue to learn and grow throughout their lives.

UCCS ACADEMIC STRATEGIC PLAN

GOAL	STRATEGIES	TACTICS
Guarantee a quality comprehensive educational experience that prepares students to excel personally, professionally, and as global citizens	*1. Identify the programs we should be offering to make UCCS an institution of choice*	• Establish a process for program approval and prioritization • Develop specific criteria for new programs/options • Determine the appropriate balance of undergraduate and graduate programs • Examine curriculum for congruency with goals • Develop an Honors Program • Provide needed resources to existing programs • Identify new areas for development of degrees, minors and certificate programs • Create interdisciplinary programs and develop an infrastructure to support them
	2. Build cultural competency	• Adopt and disseminate definition of cultural competency across campus to faculty, staff and students in multiple and varied formats • Promote culturally responsive teaching across all programs • Strengthen the office of International Student Services • Create avenues to national and international student experiences • Encourage departments to develop curricula that integrate cultural competency and global awareness • Develop funding for an opportunity hire program • Develop unit diversity plans aligned with campus diversity strategic plan
	3. Expand technology to enhance learning and expand to national markets	• Determine the appropriate balance of on-campus and online courses • Invest in instructional technology • Provide resources for online course development
	4. Meet students where they are and take them where they need to be	• Re-examine existing programs to make sure they serve the needs of current and prospective students • Ensure that assessment leads to real program improvement • Determine appropriate class sizes, course frequencies and time scheduling to maximize student success • Coordinate facility development and changes with academic needs

GOAL	STRATEGIES	TACTICS
Guarantee a quality comprehensive educational experience that prepares students to excel personally, professionally, and as global citizens	5. *Make experiential, interdisciplinary, and integrative learning a hallmark of UCCS*	• Promote an understanding of experiential, interdisciplinary and integrative learning and provide support for programs and faculty to pursue them • Promote undergraduate research • Increase resources for field-based courses • Promote internships and professional experiences • Coordinate service learning • Create robust international partnerships
	6. *Empower and reward faculty to be excellent teachers*	• Strengthen the connection between the Teaching and Learning Center and academic departments • Provide resources for faculty development • Strengthen the Teaching Excellence Council • Strengthen and continue faculty participation in the Knapsack Institute: Transforming the Curriculum Summer Program
	7. *Make UCCS a model of integrated academic affairs and student affairs.*	• Integrate campus life and academic programs • Systematically identify and address barriers to student success. • Improve retention rate • Evaluate the retention of diverse students by college and department to identify specific challenges and strategies
	8. *Create distinctive campus themes in focused areas*	• Link courses and faculty scholarship to campus themes • Develop an invited speaker series to reinforce themes and strengthen learning and research on campus • Build collaborative relationships with the community to reinforce the themes

GOAL	STRATEGIES	TACTICS
Invest in responsible growth of research, scholarship, and creative work that serve the campus and the public good.	1. *Provide professional development activities for research, scholarship, and creative works*	• Provide grant writing workshops • Establish system of collegial mentorship around research • Promote formal and informal dialogue around research, scholarship, & creative work
	2. *Continue to build the support infrastructure for sponsored research*	• Hire professional grant writers for colleges and programs • Review ICR distribution policy • Ensure campus provides needed infrastructure and space for research and creative works laboratories/studios • Ensure access to information resources • Develop the research park • Reward faculty for grant activity
	3. *Develop a support infrastructure for unsponsored research, scholarship, and creative works*	• Increase support for CRCW • Create mechanism to publicize/exhibit unsponsored research, scholarship, and creative works • Ensure access to information resources • Ensure adequate space for creative and scholarly work • Increase travel funds for faculty.
	4. *Facilitate research and creative work collaboration among faculty, students, and the community*	• Build research connections with K-12, nonprofits, business, and industry • Host annual research symposium for faculty, students, and community • Encourage the scholarship of teaching and learning • Educate the community about UCCS faculty research • Provide support for centers, including research centers • Provide support for community advisory boards
	5. *Promote an environment conducive to undergraduate and graduate research and creative work*	• Continue to grow the undergraduate research symposium • Create forums for graduate students to share research • Create a reward structure for faculty who include undergraduate and graduate students in research • Develop summer research internship programs
	6. *Develop and support the transfer of research ideas to application*	• Reward faculty for viable invention disclosures • Create ways to make CITTI more central to the campus mission • Promote and enhance the technology transfer efforts on campus

GOAL	STRATEGIES	TACTICS
Integrate the roles of teaching, research, and service in the academic lives of faculty.	1. *Educate faculty on the changing roles of faculty in higher education.*	• Provide information on new resource development role of faculty • Conduct faculty workshop on evolving faculty roles • Re-evaluate faculty work with regards to the 40-40-20 model • Broaden the definition of service to include community stewardship • Build support for participation in faculty governance • Provide diversity education to faculty
	2. *Reward faculty appropriately for their work.*	• Develop robust differentiated workload guidelines • Revise RTP criteria to reflect expectations • Strengthen rewards for faculty service • Revise annual merit criteria to reflect expectations • Revise other campus policies (such as sponsored research). • Nurture innovation and entrepreneurship • Streamline committees (task force model) • Encourage departments to recognize diversity contributions within departmental criteria for the evaluation of teaching, research and service as appropriate to each academic discipline
	3. *Provide professional development in teaching, research, and scholarship*	• Create opportunities for faculty to discuss research and teaching • Ensure that RTP criteria include professional development • Provide mentoring and other focused development opportunities for faculty • Provide resources for faculty to attend national conferences on higher education issues • Provide support, guidance and resources for faculty development including those who are not tenure—track
	4. *Define the role and status of non-tenure track faculty.*	• Determine appropriate ratio of TT to NTT faculty • Integrate NTTF more fully into the fabric of the university

GOALS	*STRATEGIES*	*TACTICS*
Nurture innovation and entrepreneurship in support of campus, college, and university success	1. *Establish clear policies to encourage, promote, and reward entrepreneurship and innovation in course delivery of academic and clinical programs*	• Expand cash-funded programs to meet community and national needs • Develop strategic plan/policies for multiple/different delivery methods • Empower colleges to take risks around program creation and delivery (structure/incentives) • Review policies to empower faculty and staff to be entrepreneurial and innovative
	2. *Identify campus' areas of comparative advantage*	• Develop rapid response to identified opportunities • Identify the cost of not taking action • Build mutually beneficial partnerships
	3. *Support campus innovations that lead to sustainability.*	• Integrate academic programs into the campus sustainability strategic plan • Encourage research and teaching that further sustainability goals

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