



The Academic Agenda Address: A 'Report Card' on Integrated Planning

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Every time I speak to the University community about Integrated Planning, I feel the urge to declare myself a non-believer in planning. That's because for many people, planning is associated with central direction, a top-down vision, and a refusal to modify, adjust, and adapt. A rigid, centrally directed planning exercise, with everyone expected to declare fealty to the Plan, is not going to work in the modern university.

On the other hand, if planning means doing some critical things together, putting aside for a moment our own personal and local concerns to pursue something more ambitious in a self-conscious manner, aware of the risks and the gains, then it is certainly something we can do, or at least it is something we should try to do.

Even on this more modest scale, however, it is not easy to pull off. Jean-Jacques Rousseau described the problem in metaphorical terms. His metaphor was the "stag hunt", and it is assuming an increasingly prominent place among game theorists. The premise is straightforward. To hunt a deer requires endurance and numbers. It is big game and will not be brought down easily or quickly. Getting people to stay the course, work with one another, and avoid distractions is the challenge.

The metaphorical distraction is the hare. Hunting hare is much easier than hunting deer. It doesn't take as many people and can be done more quickly. Of course, the payoff is much smaller. But it is also more assured. The coordination problem takes the form of trying to ensure that enough people embark on a deer hunt to make it successful, and that relatively few defect to hunt hare.

There are two Nash equilibria in the stag hunt game. The first is that everyone hunts deer; the second is that everyone defects and hunts hare. In the case of a division of effort – some hunt deer, some hare – the chances of capturing a deer goes down and the number of hare caught also diminishes. It won't come as a surprise to learn that getting people to stay on the stag hunt is easier in smaller groups; once you get to a certain size, hare hunting seems to be the equilibrium of choice.

In some ways, and I don't want to push this too hard, Integrated Planning is like a stag hunt, or a number of stag hunts. Organizing a stag hunt at the department, college, or university levels always involves the reality that hare are easier prey. Game theorists call it the "risk dominant equilibrium". It is no criticism to say that academics are drawn to the familiar, anxious to promote their own discipline, eager to court supporters for personal projects. Stag hunts involve pooling aspirations, building strategies, and supporting one another.

The familiar problem is the development of trust. That's why game theorists often look at

the stag hunt as a problem of social learning as much as a problem of coordination. If the game is played over and over, the equilibrium that the stag hunt represents becomes more likely. The motivation, by the way, for hunting deer is generally fear. Fear, in particular, that deer will be hunted successfully by others. When we talk about competition among universities, there is implicit in this language the worry that others will do what we are too timid, too disorganized, or too selfish to do. Yes, resources matter, but they are not the only critical ingredient in success. Social capital is another.

The *Integrated Plan* contains stags and hares. Some of the projects that the colleges have advanced for themselves over this planning cycle are major undertakings, ones that ask everyone to set aside their own more parochial desires and fasten on the larger undertaking. These are transformative projects, and the risks are high. Arguably, both the Colleges of Medicine and Agriculture, for example, are currently hunting deer.

At the University level, the *Integrated Plan* and the multi-year budget represent, taken together, perhaps the biggest stag hunt of all. Keeping this hunt going for four years is not easy, but I'm here to tell you that it definitely has its rewards.

Recall, those of you who were with us before 2002, that decision making at the University was described by many of you as a series of one-offs, responsive to opportunities or threats, but in no way actually asserting a coherent agenda. The community was full of suspicions: that resources did not track performance, that insiders got preferential treatment, and that decisions were made without any agreed-upon criteria.

On the budgetary side, complaints about the lack of transparency and accountability were rife. Cutbacks had lowered trust in one another and raised anxieties that no priorities would emerge and that everyone would be diminished. The planning horizon was one year at best, and decisions were made without a full appreciation of the opportunity costs, mostly because they were made in isolation from other possibilities.

I am not going to tell you that Integrated Planning has ended all of that. There is still a problem with transparency, and there are those who feel that high performance is not adequately rewarded. The stag hunt we have devised does not involve everybody equally, and there is still a temptation to invest in the odd hare that happens to cross our path. All of this is true.

By the same token, most of the projects we embarked upon together in 2003 are advancing, and many of these qualify as genuine stag hunts. The risks are high, the goals are ambitious, and the rewards are great.

What Progress?

So, what progress have we made? When the *Integrated Plan* was put together, we focused on seven distinct categories, not thinking so much about each of the individual items that were assembled underneath these headings. As it turns out, there are over seventy individual initiatives mentioned in the *Integrated Plan*. Some of these are truly narrow in scope, while others are very broad. It won't surprise you to learn that I will concentrate on the larger projects. And let me acknowledge at the beginning that any summary "score" on this report card will be distorting if none of the major projects are very close to completion.

To make it easier to appreciate where we are overall, I have used a very simple scorecard based on the familiar red, green, and amber traffic light pattern. Green is assigned to those projects that are on time and roughly unfolding the way we expected. That doesn't mean they are necessarily complete or even that they will be entirely in place at the end of the planning cycle. It does mean that we are confident that expectations will be met.

Amber initiatives are not unfolding quite the way we thought. Either they're behind in terms of timing, or they are taking a different shape, or they have encountered some kind of obstacle, including simply a lack of sufficient attention.

Red-light initiatives are not on track. They are unlikely to be completed in this planning cycle and may require considerable rethinking. There's nothing wrong with that. Some of these initiatives will be contained in the next planning cycle, and some of the changes will make them sustainable. Some may be abandoned altogether. While this may sound harsh, it is a recognition that our Plan was ambitious and not every initiative will be advanced as originally intended. We shouldn't give up on them, but the chances of their completion in this planning cycle are becoming more remote.

Finally, before I offer an assessment of our record to this point, let me emphasize that this is my assessment, or rather the assessment of the Provost's Committee on Integrated Planning, based on the information available which, in many cases, was provided to us by others. We acknowledge that some of our assessments may have missed the mark. There are Deans and others in the room who will take exception to how I've characterized our progress. Indeed, as we put this report card together, I tell no secrets when I confess that we had the odd disagreement among ourselves in terms of assessment.

Section B – Strategic Initiatives: From an academic point of view, nothing is more important than moving these initiatives forward. If you look at the bar on the left of the slide, you'll see that the picture is mixed. That bar represents the summary of our assessments in the Strategic Initiatives area. Every initiative has been assessed independently, and we will be giving you the website where you can check on each one.

There are many initiatives in this section of the Plan; let me begin by focusing on the health sciences. Some wondered about the wisdom of featuring the health sciences so prominently in the *Integrated Plan*. Our CIHR record was not inspiring, our facilities were clearly outmoded, clinicians had little experience with research, and some basic science departments saw their future somewhere other than in Medicine. All the more reason for doing something. Like it or not, we are distinguished from other universities by the great opportunities made available by having a medical school and a host of health sciences programs.

So where are we? We've scaled back expectations on the matter of a health sciences council. That's not going to happen right away, but we have come to realize that we need to create independent budgetary capacity to manage the new initiatives that are emerging among the health sciences. We do not have new health sciences degrees, and I'm not sure if or when we're going to get them, but it doesn't seem likely by 2007. We do, however, have every prospect that the two-year common program asked for in the Plan will emerge by 2007. It may be part, in fact, of a number of "platforms" that are being put together for interdisciplinary work. In this case, we need to better coordinate our basic sciences programming, to save resources, and to provide our students with viable career choices. This is one of those initiatives that will emerge eventually, but it won't be as straightforward as the *Integrated Plan* suggested. Clearly an amber.

On the research and graduate studies side, we are well advanced on the Master's program in public health. In fact, we are well advanced in creating a School of Public Health. This really is a stag hunt. No one else has created such a school in Canada, and time is of the essence. But it will require an unprecedented willingness on the part of faculty in the health sciences colleges to put aside the familiar and create a research and teaching community that pools resources and puts a premium on collaboration. Right now we are on track, but given our track record, I have to be cautious in my estimation of the likelihood of getting there.

As for the other academic initiatives, we still have hope that colleges will put together innovative combinations of degree studies so that students won't have to limit their experience of the University to a single area of study or a single discipline. At a university with so many professional programs combined with a strong arts and science core, we have

great opportunities that we're not taking advantage of, and that is the ability to provide combinations. You can't do that in small schools, and most large universities seem so fixated on their research performance that curriculum reform struggles to find a place on the agenda. We've made a start with the entrepreneurship options, but I would say that taken together, our progress warrants no more than an amber light. This is something that I expect we will return to in the next planning cycle.

As for concrete moves at the level of specific colleges, we have launched the Computer Engineering program that the College of Engineering, and the University, believes is critical to the future of the College and helpful to the employment scene in the province. And we have launched the Aboriginal Education Research Centre in Education, both with support from the Academic Priorities Fund. Support from this Fund will also be available to the Digital Media Centre in Arts and Science, but the progress here has been a bit slower. We are cautiously optimistic that this project will be finished before July 2007.

Finally, having talked about the School of Public Health, let me say a word on two other schools that are proceeding with enough focus and determination to warrant ambers. The School of the Environment will likely draw together the work that is currently being done in a variety of areas and create a new Master's program in environmental studies. My guess is that this will be in place before July 2007. The same will happen with the School of Public Policy. There are two caveats. First, the campus community must embrace the idea of schools as a way of overcoming some self-imposed limitations on our academic mission. Second, we must be prepared to move existing resources in the direction of these initiatives. It is not enough to be in favour of these things so long as they don't affect us. The nature of a stag hunt is that you must accept the risk that there will be no payoffs for your investment, knowing all along that the chances are good that new schools will represent new investments and new opportunities.

Section C – Supporting Success: In the *Integrated Plan*, we indicated that we would use everyone's resources to support our students and our faculty writ large. The premise is that this is an imposing environment where success does not come automatically, nor does it come as readily for some as it does for others.

In this area, we have some significant initial successes. You've heard the President describe the increase in graduate enrolment at the U of S. Much of that has occurred because of the \$2 million investment that we've made in graduate scholarship support. The last \$1 million installment is being paid for from the Academic Priorities Fund and used to provide financial aid to outstanding students through the Dean's Scholarship Program. Support for undergraduate scholarships has increased significantly as well. In both cases, we have used the Academic Priorities Fund to make this happen.

Allow me a word on the Academic Priorities Fund. In the lead up to the *Integrated Plan*, approximately \$3 million was set aside to fund priorities. Some believed, erroneously, that these funds would be dispersed to academically strong programs, for example those that received particularly positive ratings from the Systematic Program Review (SPR) exercise. But I have said all along that the APF was created to fund change and priorities arising from the *Integrated Plan*. It is imperative that you appreciate that we have no other way to fund systematic change at this university.

Receiving a positive SPR evaluation provides colleges and programs with the vital signal that they are offering a quality degree experience. It does not qualify anyone for additional resources. What it does qualify you for is the reasonable expectation that you will have the resources to continue doing what you're doing. That means replacement faculty positions when colleagues retire or resign. The decision to restore resources is a vote of confidence. It is not an entitlement, and it should not be extended to all programs. We have to get in the habit of realizing that nothing we do merits continued support by virtue of the fact that we do it. Simply put, we have to do it well, and it must make strategic sense.

The investment in change that has occurred in the "Supporting Success" part of the *Integrated Plan* is very much dependent on the use of Academic Priorities Fund monies. In addition to the scholarship support, we are conducting a major retention study outlined in the Plan, and we have created a Global Commons (albeit not on the scale and with the resources that will ultimately be needed). In my opinion, we are catching up after years of underinvestment in the student experience. *Maclean's* tells us that we are among the institutions making the lowest investments in this area. This planning cycle will get us on track, but it will not get us where we need to be.

As for investing in faculty, there is no question that strengthening the Office of the Vice-President Research has been a great boon to the research community. The services provided to faculty, combined with an increasingly sophisticated appreciation of the research landscape, have already made a dramatic impact on the research culture at the University of Saskatchewan. The new faculty I speak to have high praise for the work that the Office is doing in getting their careers underway.

Now a project close to my own heart, the new Learning Centre. This project, under the direction of Jim Greer, gets a green. It gets a green not because we have spent a lot of money, because we haven't spent anything yet. It is on track because faculty and staff who have been working for years in isolation see that the student agenda and the faculty agenda in teaching and learning are moving forward in a stag hunt. No one is chasing rabbits. There's a long way to go, and it won't be done all at once. But by 2007, we will have a new

Learning Centre, it will be located in the Library, and it will offer an unprecedented range of services to students and faculty. Most important, it will concretize our commitment to their success.

Of all the investments we are making in our students, and there are many, none is more important than the programs we have launched under the banner of the Aboriginal Achievement Model. Designed to allow Aboriginal students access to the full range of our academic programming, the idea is that in partnership with bands, the University will assist students to succeed, especially in math and science, which hold the keys to a number of professions. These programs are well advanced, and the new space we have is facilitating collaboration between the Student and Enrolment Services Division and the College of Arts and Science. Overall, this area is a green as well, mostly by dint of hard work on the part of many people, not least of whom is the President's Special Advisor on Aboriginal Affairs, George Lafond.

Section D – Changing Practices: In November 2003, I sent a letter to the University community outlining our financial situation, including the existence of a substantial structural deficit. In the course of that letter, I indicated that we would need to look at the way we currently do business and make some changes. I had in mind efficiencies that would allow us to save money and deliver better services.

In some areas, we can point to very clear cost savings. An example is the ten-percent reduction in the operating budget of Facilities Management. This kind of change is not without pain: it has resulted in the elimination of eleven jobs with an additional six to come; but we are on track and will achieve the targeted savings by the end of the planning cycle.

In other areas, we have made longer-term changes that will cost us a bit more in the short term but should generate savings or improve efficiency in the longer term. Dean Wishart, for example, has introduced a new system for assessing tuition for graduate students, one that is fairer to them and encourages timely completion.

In a number of areas related to collective bargaining, the University needs to make sensible changes. These include benefits packages (too many, too uneven), job classifications, and appointment categories. It is too early to be certain how all of these discussions will go, but I believe this area deserves a green for the progress made to date.

Other topics are not as well advanced. We are probably at red on matters of classroom allocation, for example. We are now aware that our classrooms are underutilized, with classes of suboptimal size routinely placed in rooms designed for many more students. Timetables remain exclusively in the hands of the departments with the result that too many classrooms lie empty in the late afternoons and early mornings, to say nothing of Fridays. We need to look at more holistic approaches. The Planning Committee has taken on the task of assessing “low enrolment courses”, but progress has been modest so far.

In addition to classroom utilization, we also believe we can do more to utilize our other physical and financial assets. The Preston Crossing development has been a big success and will provide over \$1 million in student scholarships annually. We plan to complete that development, as well as look at other development opportunities for our real estate portfolio.

Perhaps the biggest changes in practice have come about not via the *Integrated Plan*, but via the purchase of new student and financial systems. Students have embraced the new features that allow them to apply, register, and pay their fees online. PAWS has met with uniform praise, all except those moments when it crashes. Other systems, such as UniFi and SiRiUS, have not gone as smoothly, and we underestimated the time and effort required to implement these systems. However, we have plans to get them back on track, and we expect all of these systems to deliver increased efficiency and improved service in the long run.

Section E – Enriching our Physical Environment: The *Integrated Plan* outlined a long list of building projects, including some that were already underway. From walking around campus, you will know that we have made progress in completing a number of these projects, such as the Physical Activity Complex, the College Building, the Stadium Parkade, and the Pulse Crop facility. All of these were on time and on budget, although the Stadium Parkade has not been as well utilized as we had hoped.

A number of other major projects are also underway and on track. Some of them, such as WCVM, are under construction, while others such as the Academic Health Sciences Building and the College of Law expansion are in the design stages.

A few of the capital projects outlined in the *Integrated Plan* have not proceeded as quickly as we would like. One example is the University Residence Project. The delay on this project is due in part to a change in overall vision, from a development of many buildings south of College Drive to a phased development beginning with undergraduate dorms constructed near Place Riel. The Aboriginal Student Space is also behind schedule, but there too we have refined the vision and have commissioned the architectural drawings.

Section G – Changing Structures: We agreed in 2004 that it was time to look at basic organizational arrangements at the University of Saskatchewan. The task force called for in the *Integrated Plan* has been created and after considerable debate has sent its “schools” document to the Planning Committee of Council. The Task Force builds on a strong tradition of Administration-Council collaboration on important issues, this time the changing structural face of the University.

The idea of an Undergraduate Council is on the Task Force's agenda, and I expect we will see a

proposal along these lines before the end of this term. The same goes for a proposal for facilitating interdisciplinary undergraduate work. This work has taken longer to develop, but the wisdom of creating a group that would look chiefly at how we are structured and how we could structure ourselves better is now quite evident. We are constantly confronting ideas that would require a different arrangement of institutions and responsibilities. The schools concept is merely the first. And it is high time we looked critically at our existing structures. Many of them are restraining innovation and collaboration, the very qualities we need to nurture. This whole area is amber in my opinion. We have outlined the changes, but the real test is whether we have the nerve to move forward with them.

Section F – Measuring our Progress: An old business school adage has it that you can't improve what you can't measure. There's another old adage, however, that has been invoked in the context of universities: whatever can be measured doesn't matter, and whatever matters can't be measured.

I don't want to get in the middle of this, except to say that the *Integrated Plan* did anticipate that we would measure our progress. To some degree, that has meant simply paying attention to the things we said we would do and honestly assessing whether we have done them. But in the bitterly competitive arena in which we operate, where *Maclean's* magazine and a host of imitators measure us whether we like it or not, it seems sensible to establish some metrics if we hope to persuade anyone that we take our objectives seriously.

Many of you will have heard the President report on our progress on the *Strategic Directions* earlier this month. He spoke about the accomplishments of our faculty and the success we've had in recruiting graduate students. He reminded us of our growing reputational ranking and pointed out that we still have some glaring gaps between our aspirations and our performance on the research front. The kinds of measures he cited are critical for us: in fact, we need to be reminded on a regular basis of where we stand relative to others on indices that affect our funding and our ability to attract students.

But beyond generating the obvious measures that the President spoke about, we haven't made huge strides. We have not benchmarked in any active sense, for example, so we don't know whether the progress we've made represents something we should be pleased about or not. We have difficulty, unbelievable difficulty, extracting information from our new systems, and the data we have is almost useless when it comes to comparisons with other institutions. Those of you who have tried to determine just how many faculty members we have will recognize some of the difficulties associated with definitions.

Although we have committed to measuring our progress inside the context of the Plan itself, on critical dimensions of measurement we are in the red. We are not dead in our tracks, but we aren't moving very fast either. There are some amber sections, because we are going to make changes that will locate authority for data in a single office and place a premium on extracting the information we require from our shiny new systems. But overall, the best I can say is that this area will feature in the next Plan, if only because colleges and administrators all want to make decisions based on evidence. Right now, the evidence is not as robust as our types of decisions require. This has got to improve or we run the risk of appearing to be highly selective in what kind of picture we present.

I've given you a view of the *Integrated Plan* from thirty thousand feet. You can find an assessment of each of the initiatives in the *Integrated Plan* on the Integrated Planning website. The printed take-away piece that has been developed for today's talk contains the website address, as well as a summary scorecard of the seventy-one individual items in the Plan.

The Multi-Year Operating Budget Framework: A big part of the “integration” we aimed for in 2004 was the integration of planning and budgeting. The multi-year budget, you may remember, was presented as the companion piece to the *Integrated Plan*. They cover the same time period and reinforce one another in terms of assumptions and priorities. How has the budget fared?

Have the key assumptions made in 2004 actually unfolded as predicted? Our budget is premised on the need for the rate of growth in operating revenue to exceed the rate of growth in expenditures based on assumptions made about tuition, government support, and salaries and benefits. So far, tuition expectations are about where we thought they would be. The rate of growth in tuition has slowed down, and our enrolments are about where we expected, perhaps a bit on the low side. Salaries and benefit costs are higher than we thought they would be. In 2004, the Government announced a new salary pattern that we used to construct the multi-year budget. In 2005, they abandoned that pattern and we are caught short as a result. On the operating grant from Government, the last few years have been quite consistent with our projections. The only problem is that these are no longer high enough to pay the salary bill and retain the current level of activity. Whether we can make the multi-year budget work will depend heavily on the coming provincial budget. We need \$10.2 million in increased revenue to hit our projections. Anything less will mean a larger deficit. My overall assessment is that we are amber in terms of our assumptions.

Are we on target to implement the permanent adjustments? In the multi-year budget, we planned for \$6.2 million in *phased-in* permanent budget reductions to colleges and administrative units. These adjustments include \$1.5 million from a one-percent permanent levy and \$4.7 million in selective adjustments applied to the Colleges of Agriculture, Commerce, Pharmacy and Nutrition, and Nursing and to the Divisions of Extension and Facilities Management. In addition, we expected a contribution to be realized from changing business practices. We have met the target of \$1.9 million set for 2004-05 and the incremental target of another \$1.9 million for 2005-06. We are confident that we will meet the target for a further \$2.4 million in operat-

ing budget reductions in 2006-07. The impact of all of this is real. Positions have been lost in Facilities Management with a noticeable reduction in services. Positions have been lost in Extension and these will not be replaced. Overall, we are on target and this area is green.

Are we on target to find the one-time sources of revenue required to allow us to phase in operating budget reductions? The structural deficit became apparent in 2003-04. To allow us to phase in our budget reductions rather than absorb them immediately that year, we had to find one-time reductions that would give us until 2007 to make the permanent ones. We are on track to find the approximately \$7 million we need to achieve this goal. However, once these funds have gone, we can't get them back. In short, our financial flexibility will be considerably reduced by the time this exercise is complete.

Will the structural deficit be eliminated by the end of the first planning cycle? Yes. We will have made, by 2007, all of the necessary financial adjustments to balance our ongoing operating revenue with our ongoing expenditures. Our continual challenge will be to make sure that both remain on a sustainable growth trajectory. If we do not get the tuition and grant increases we expect, or if expenditures on utilities and salaries and benefits are higher than we project, then we will not be out of a deficit position at the beginning of the next planning cycle.

What Have we Learned?

We need to do this. To move an institution this complicated, the canvass has to be large and the campus fully engaged. We have created a set of Foundational Documents with more to come, an *Integrated Plan*, and a multi-year budget that, taken together, are the envy of universities across this country and beyond. One of the reasons that our reputation is growing, as the President reported it is, is that we have our act together.

On the other hand, we have probably bitten off more than we can chew. Several key initiatives are behind schedule, and some of them are barely off the ground. We have made startling progress in some areas, almost none in others. Next time, we should probably be a bit more conservative. In that vein, we need to construct the Plan so that there is some evenness across these initiatives. Right now, there are some very specific items and some relatively amorphous ones. Next time, we should try for fewer initiatives at roughly the same level of specificity.

The Plan at the University level is only as strong as it is at the college and unit levels. Too many plans from the colleges in particular consisted of requests for more resources to keep doing what they were already doing. If we see that again, the next planning cycle will lack the drive we need at the University level.

More time must be provided to collaborate across structural boundaries. If we hope to get plans that move the entire institution forward, they cannot come from colleges and units working entirely on their own. If anything emerged from the plans, it was the need for innovative structures that could make the best use of the University's resources. This means we need to work together better in the future.

It still takes too long to implement things. The *Integrated Plan* has the virtue of signaling clearly what we wish to accomplish. But even with that there are a host of veto points. If we can get agreement on the direction we wish to go, some means must be created to allow us to get there relatively quickly. In particular, obstacles associated with collective bargaining cannot be permitted to trump the direction established by collegial processes.

We aren't good at communicating either progress or problems. Part of our communication challenge lies in the sheer complexity of what we're trying to do. This exercise – red, green, and amber – is a gross simplification aimed at conveying an overall assessment. We have to get better at providing the University community with an ongoing account of the progress we're making.

We need to have some tolerance for ambiguity and even apparent contradiction. The Integrated Planning process has asked people to hold in their heads, simultaneously, two seemingly contradictory ideas. The first of these is that we don't have the funds to resource all of our current activities – the structural deficit. Second, we do have the funds to do new things – the Academic Priorities Fund. Some faculty have drawn from this apparent contradiction the conclusion that we are either not telling the truth about the deficit or that we are so fixated with new projects that we can't see the value of what we are currently doing. It is true that we are contracting and expanding at the same time. And yet these two things are not contradictory at all. This is really part of what it is to lead and manage – to always look for and pursue new opportunities and to prune activities where we think we can do better. This is especially true for organizations that are seeing, as we are, a very modest growth in budget. Whether we are doing enough of this kind of planning is highly debatable. The Academic Priorities Fund at its apex contained \$3 million, just over one percent of the Operating Budget. I think that critical change can take place at the margin, but we are by no means failing to invest in current activities. In fact, if you look at our hiring practices, we are investing very heavily in the

things we are already doing. Frankly, I'm not sure we are being bold enough, but I'll leave that decision to you and the next planning cycle.

The Next Cycle

Yes, there will be another Integrated Plan, and I'm here to tell you that it's not that far away. I also want to assure you that it will not be as challenging, complicated, and time consuming as the first. I want to do that, but I'm not sure I should.

Every unit will be expected, once again, to develop their own integrated plan and, once again, we will create a University-level plan like the one I've been reporting on today. In terms of timelines, the instructions to colleges and units will go out in May of this year, but your plans won't be due until September of 2007. 2007-08 will be a transition year in which we move from the first to the second planning cycle. The second Integrated Plan should be adopted by Council and the Board in May 2008, four years since the last one. At the same time, I expect that a new multi-year budget will also be adopted that will take us to 2012.

I anticipate some differences when it comes to process. First, the instructions to units will likely be much more precise and focused. The plans last time were at different levels of detail, addressed different issues, and made different assumptions. Obviously, there needs to be room for colleges and units to express their unique aspirations. By the same token, we need more discipline in terms of the topics addressed. Expect something like a form with enough flexibility to allow for inspiration.

Room should be made early on for a University-wide discussion of the big themes. Last time, those big themes emerged from the college and unit plans more or less at the last minute. It gave me some sleepless nights to be honest. I would like to give people a chance to discuss the big ideas first so that the college and unit plans could take a measure of these as they put their own plans together.

Third, colleges in particular will be encouraged to seek some external assistance in the development of their plans. As we rethink our assessment processes, it is evident that colleges and departments gained enormously from SPR and the insights and experiences of academics at other institutions. We will assist colleges in putting together teams of outside advisors who can comment on current activities and recommend new directions. No college will be obliged to invest in this kind of advice, but some will be particularly encouraged to take full advantage of the opportunity.

Finally, the multi-year budget has been so helpful to the Board and the Administration that it is hard to recall what we did without it. This May, we will provide the Board with our revised forecast for 2006-07 and with a budget for the transition year, 2007-08. The next multi-year budget won't be available until May 2008, the same time that Council and the Board will see the new Integrated Plan.

Final Thoughts

I don't have much to leave you with in the way of final thoughts, but let me recount for you a recent encounter I had with a Department Head at a meeting attended by colleagues from another department. We were talking about the changing culture and trying to find the words to capture what has been going on these last few years as we struggle to plan intelligently and hunt the odd deer.

This is, roughly, how this Department Head described the situation: simply getting on with one's own research and teaching agenda is no longer enough. It's important, he said, to be strategic and focused. You will be rewarded for your teaching and research, but you will be at risk of missing the future, and the future is being written on a larger and larger canvass. This has been the silent message of the planning exercise at the U of S.

The environment for higher education has been increasingly threatening in the last twenty years. Inside the University, we pride ourselves in being self-governing. That's the source of our liberty. So we bloody well better govern ourselves. Don't leave it for administrators, who don't have the ability to do it on their own (even if they occasionally have the desire). Don't leave it to the unions. And don't leave it to your colleagues, who will be making the same kinds of calculations you are. Do it for yourself. **Go deer hunting. Do it or regret it.**



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