September 14, 2012

Charge to the Research and Creative Endeavors Task Force

The university has developed significantly over the last 25 years, enhancing its educational, research, and community service programs. The recent and dramatic reduction in financial support from the state creates a new set of challenges and opportunities for the university. The purpose of the strategic planning process is to consider how we can build upon our current strengths, seize emerging opportunities, and meet our challenges. In doing this, we will continue our development as a leading public research university and accomplish our educational, research, and community service missions.

The planning process will rely heavily on the work of a steering committee and five task forces with their associated working groups. Each of the five task forces and their associated working groups will be responsible for a specific area. The five areas are: Student Success and Academic Excellence, Research and Creative Endeavors, Community Engagement, Diversity, and Internationalization.

The Steering Committee will be responsible for the overall planning process, including the preparation of the final version of the plan. The Steering Committee will be responsible for integrating the recommendations of the task forces, creating an integrated financial plan to address the university’s financial challenges, prioritizing recommended initiatives, and considering ways to fund prioritized initiatives.

Each task force will be responsible for identifying goals and initiatives we should undertake in the referenced area, determining the resource requirements of the goals and initiatives, and setting priorities among the recommended goals and initiatives.

For the Research and Creative Endeavors task force and its associated working groups, we would like you to consider the following questions as well as others that may arise during your deliberations:
1. Over the last 25 years, we have made substantial progress as a research university. What should be the next steps in our development as a research university? What should be our aspirational goals? How should we support the development of nationally and internationally renowned programs? How should our research and creative endeavors be positioned to address regional and national challenges? (Research and Creative Endeavors)

2. Substantial infrastructure is required to support research and creative endeavors. This infrastructure includes library resources, facilities, equipment, and administrative support services. How can we invest in infrastructure so that our investments have the largest possible effect on our research mission? (Research and Creative Endeavors)

3. As we have grown as a research university, we have developed programs to support our research enterprise. Are our existing programs to support research sufficient? Should we consider additional initiatives to support our research enterprise? Are there opportunities to expand research using alternative funding models? If so, what initiatives should we consider in order to do so? (Research)

4. We have recently been designated a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) by the federal government. How can we use our HSI status to enhance funding opportunities? How, if at all, should these funding opportunities alter our strategies for investing in research? (Research)

5. Our research efforts provide extraordinary opportunities for our undergraduate students. How can we enhance the opportunities for students to engage in undergraduate research experiences? How can we ensure that students have opportunities to explore the many resources (e.g., professional seminars) afforded by a research university? How can we help students use these experiences to advance professionally? (Research)

6. The creative and performing arts are integral parts of the university’s academic and co-curricular programs. How do we envision our creative and performing arts programs developing? What initiatives might we pursue to realize our vision? How will these programs be integrated into the daily life of our campus? How will these programs engage our broader community? (Creative and Performing Arts)

7. KPBS is a critical part of the university. It is also an important community resource in the creative and performing arts. How can we integrate KPBS and the university’s arts initiatives? How can this integration advance our initiatives in the creative and performing arts? (Creative and Performing Arts)
Task force reports are due to the Steering Committee no later than February 1st. Reports should be between 1 and 5 pages and should include general information about the area of the task force, identified goals (if relevant), and recommended initiatives. The resource requirements of all recommended initiatives should also be included. Relevant background information and the detailed rationale for recommended initiatives should be included in appendices. The final task force report will integrate the task force recommendations and integrated financial plans as described above.

To facilitate the engagement of the campus community, the Steering Committee and each task force should hold an open forum to solicit comments and opinions from the university community. Members of the community should also be invited to communicate suggestions, in writing, to the committee and task force chairs. All written reports and recommendations should be presented in draft form on the strategic planning process website, and members of the community should be invited to comment prior to the completion of any report.

Thank you for your contributions to the planning process. The planning process represents an important opportunity to reflect on the present state of the university and to consider how we can make choices--identifying goals and planning initiatives--that will help us meet our challenges, seize opportunities, and fulfill our mission.

With best regards,

Elliot Hirshman  
President

William F. Eadie, Ph.D.  
Professor

Rob O’Keefe  
President, Associated Students