Agenda

- Introductions
- Why strategic planning
- Context at Northwestern
- Key external developments
- Processes for strategic planning
- Steps/Templates
- Relationship to program review
- Strategic planning at the school/department/unit level
Motivations for Strategic Planning

- To make strategic implications of decisions explicit and reflective of unit wishes; position the unit to be proactive
- To clarify unit goals and objectives
- To position the unit well competitively
- To communicate with those external to the unit
- To insure better use of resources
Major Context at Northwestern

- Broad program portfolio
- Improving student quality
- Improving faculty quality
- Growing research base
- Balance between education and research
- Emphasis on collaboration
- Strength of Chicago location
Major Context at Northwestern (cont.)

- Relative financial stability but altered financial environment
  - Operating budget funds major share of student aid
  - Improving, but still low indirect cost recovery rate
  - Administrative infrastructure needs attention
  - Ongoing facility needs
Major Context at Northwestern (cont.)

- Competing against some peers with richer endowments; they are currently facing great challenges
- Land poor
- Positive culture
  - Self-reflective
  - Ambitious
  - Collegial
  - Activist
  - Cooperation across schools
  - Good faculty/administrative relations
Key External Developments

GENERAL

- Changed economic context: Recession and market losses
- Globalization
- Increasing diversity of the population
- The share of higher education covered by state and federal governments continues to decline
- The cost of a college degree continues to climb
- Public research institutions are trying to “privatize”
- The U.S. is losing its dominance in critical areas of science and innovation
Key External Developments (cont.)

GENERAL

- Security concerns are negatively impacting U.S. attractiveness to foreign student
- The impact of technology on campus is increasing
- Increasing importance of entrepreneurial activities
- Expectations by students for more personalized and convenient support
- Lifelong learning
- Importance of building strategic alliances with others
Key External Developments (cont.)

SPECIFIC

- Developments in your area
- Student demand
- Markets for graduates
- Availability of funding

LOCAL

- Institutional strategic directions
- Unit strategic directions
- Directions of related units at the institution
Processes

- Process matters
- Wide range of options on how to do strategic planning
- Examples that work well—committees to address specific topics, select individuals who have the respect of their peers and represent different areas of the field, use of a facilitator
- Importance of timelines as well as allowing time for thinking to develop
Important to nurture a sense of ownership among faculty, staff, and students—there should be opportunities for input before any document is developed.

Try to identify some quick wins to build confidence.

Implement.

Assess its realism.

Let the plan shape budget and fund-raising.

Regularly revisit.

Revise periodically.
Steps

- Articulate mission and values
- Analyze state of the unit
- Assess external context and competitors
- Establish vision
  - Mesh with institutional context
  - Capitalize on unique strengths
Steps (cont.)

- Set goals and priorities
- Develop action plan and strategies—with people charged with responsibility, timelines and budgets
- Execute
- Measure
- Refine and update periodically—but review it regularly, maybe even formally
Relationship to Program Review

- Expectation of the process that you will articulate a strategic plan
- Assessment of strengths and weaknesses as an essential component
- Encourage you to annually review the program review report, implementation agreement and follow-up report; key input into the next cycle
Strategic Planning at Northwestern

Questions

Thank you