STRATEGIC PLAN DEFINITIONS

There are numerous ways to approach strategic planning. Depending on previous context, many staff have different definitions for terms: objectives, goals, outcomes, strategies, aims. It is important, therefore, that all staff within Campus Life have a common understanding of how we use the terms.

PILLARS offer provocative propositions: powerful, visionary statements derived from the Appreciative Inquiry process written in the present tense describing what things will be like once attained.

DEPARTMENT GOALS: broad, general, yet clear statement of the long-range projected state of affairs which the department plans or intends to achieve or bring about—a realistic end point. Goals are expressions of the department mission.

STRATEGIES: plan of action designed to achieve a goal. Programs, services, and administrative tasks are strategies. Each strategy should have all the elements of “SMART” strategies:

- Measurable: Is it measurable and we can measure it?
- Achievable: Can we get it done within this timeframe, political climate, budget?
- Relevant: Will this strategy lead to the desired goal?
- Specific: Is this strategy relevant to University Priorities and Co-curricular Agenda?
- Time Framed: When will we accomplish this strategy?

OUTCOMES: detailed and specific statements derived from the strategy/goal. They are specifically about the intended end results of your program or service. Outcomes need to be measurable.

- Metrics have a numeric value.
  - Attendance / Use
  - Revenue
- Satisfaction Outcomes refer to client or user satisfaction levels
- Learning Outcomes are what you want the constituent to know or to do differently rather than what you are going to do to the student or constituent. Stated learning outcomes should refer to the appropriate competency in the Division of Student Affairs Co-curricular Agenda and the University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULO’s) in UNLV’s General Education Requirements.

Learning Outcomes are what you want the student to know or to do differently rather then what you are going to do to the student. For undergraduate students, the stated learning outcomes should refer to the appropriate competency in the Campus Life Learning Outcomes, which refer to the Division of Student Affairs Co-curricular Agenda and the University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULOs) in UNLV’s General Education Requirements.
### Example Campus Life Learning Outcomes

**By UULO**

- Inquiry and Critical Thinking
  - Critical thinking
  - Reflective thinking
  - Effective decision making
- Communication
  - Effective written communication
  - Effective oral communication
- Global / Multicultural
  - Appreciation of human differences
  - Cultural competence
  - Social justice
- Citizenship and Ethics
  - Ethics and integrity
  - Civic responsibility, social responsibility
  - Effective leadership

**From Co-curricular Agenda**

- Plan and organize
- Collaboration
- Self management
- Realistic self appraisal
- Understanding of self in relation to others
- Personal wellness
- Connection to UNLV

### ASSESSMENT MEASURES:

The criteria, process, and tools used to collect evidence and to evaluate the degree to which the intended outcomes were reached. Evaluation methods articulate the target audience of the assessment, the methods and tools for data collection, criteria that specifies that the outcome has been met, and how the data will be analyzed. Using a combination of methods to measure outcomes is desirable. Direct and indirect measures may be used as appropriate.

- Surveys, Focus Groups, Interview, Observation
- Performance
- Use / tracking / demographics
- Costs per participant
- Process time
- Student records (retention, GPA)

### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

Help define and evaluate success of our organization in terms of making progress towards our pillars. Campus Life has identified performance indicators for each pillar; these indicators include some of the metrics and outcomes departments identified for strategies in addition to some big picture measures. The performance indicators allow us to compare performance to year to year. These measures include participation counts, usage/visitor counts, revenues, expenses, benchmark ratings, learning outcomes, retention, and awards among others. The performance indicators are available as an appendix to the Campus Life annual report each year.