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TO: ECU Executives of Strategic Planning

FROM: Marilyn Sheerer, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor
for Academic and Student Affairs

David Weismiller, Associate Provost, Institutional Planning,
Assessment, and Research

DATE: June 1, 2011

RE: Strategic Planning Guidelines for 2011 and Mid-Year Meetings

We are providing an update on the university's integrated, ongoing strategic planning process and outlining our next steps. Thank you for your work in support of the university's Strategic Action Plan. East Carolina University's 2010 Strategic Action Plan builds upon ECU's long tradition of leadership in education, research, and engagement and *OUR COMMITMENT TO* our five Strategic Directions found in ECU Tomorrow: A Vision for Leadership and Service: *Education for a New Century; The Leadership University; Economic Prosperity in the East; Health, Health Care and Medical Innovation; and the Arts, Culture, and the Quality of Life.* Our Strategic Action Plan builds on the University's core strengths, the skill and capacities of its faculty and staff, and ECU's many established national and international partnerships and supports our commitment to quality enhancement and student success.

The strategic planning process, guided by our Office of Planning under the direction of Dr. Fiona Baxter, continues to evolve as we strive to enhance excellence in a time of increased challenges and diminished resources. Changing demographics, rising costs, and growing competition for qualified faculty, staff, and students now characterize the environment in which we operate. As we approach the end of the first year of our current three-year institutional strategic planning cycle (2010-2013), it is important to reaffirm our commitment to strategic planning, authentic assessment, and quality enhancement efforts to accomplish our mission and five strategic directions.

Chancellor Ballard appointed a University Strategic Planning Committee (USPC) in fall, 2009. This group of representatives from across the institution was charged with developing the University's Strategic Action Plan for 2010-13 in accordance with sound planning principles and to take into account recent changes due to the economic downturn. The Executive Committee of the USPC reviewed our previous successes by analyzing the plans of the colleges, schools and other units; information about the external environment for ECU and higher education; reports submitted in response to *UNC Tomorrow*; and additional data and reports available from IPAR. The committee set forth a series of goals and objectives which continue to advance ECU's vision for the future.

The Chancellor approved the 2010-13 Strategic Action Plan in May, 2010. Each of the units reporting directly to a Vice Chancellor was then asked to prepare a strategic plan aligned to the Strategic Action Plan's goals and objectives. Each unit's strategic plan is now in TracDat, our institutional strategic planning and assessment tracking system. TracDat allows us to link elements of each unit's plan to the ECU Tomorrow and report on progress towards accomplishing our mission and strategic directions.

We are also delighted to report that members of the USPC have worked to develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) linked to our Strategic Action Plan (2010-2013) that will be used to inform and guide our strategic planning process. These indicators are based on data that are publicly available and may be produced, are common nationally, are in line with those established with UNC-General Administration, and can be presented graphically so their meaning is visually apparent immediately. These can be found at <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/ipar/planning/KeyPerformanceIndicators.cfm>.

The next phase of our strategic planning process has three goals:

1. Conduct a mid-year review of progress to date in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Planning
2. Document ongoing results towards accomplishing goals
3. Begin to consider quality enhancement efforts for next year

Please work with Dr. Fiona Baxter, Director of Institutional Planning, to review your 2010-2011 plans to determine progress to date. She will be scheduling meetings with each of you this June and July. This is an **interim step** and in line with our efforts for the Office of Institutional Planning to support an ongoing strategic planning process which is research-based and grounded in quality enhancement efforts.

Results for 2010-11 are due by September 15, 2011 and should include the following elements:

1. **A brief articulated vision of where you see your unit's future in 5-10 years.** This vision should incorporate an analysis of the overarching trends and forces that are shaping the environment in which your unit operates, nationally and locally.
2. **Specific results towards establishing your goals and quality enhancement strategies.** As you consider future directions, please consider the implications and impact on current capacity in areas such as enrollment, personnel requirements, budgetary resources/flexibility, and space/facilities, as appropriate to your academic or support unit. This information will allow us to align and integrate University planning efforts.
3. **Strategic performance indicators appropriate to unit level goals.** The University will continue to monitor key performance indicators at the university level. Units are encouraged to continue to collect data and utilize indicators appropriate to unit level goals and strategies. For example, how do your measures of success or strategic indicators gauge your progress? What specific data in relation to these measures and indicators demonstrate your progress and what other data would you like to consider?
4. **An indication of how goals of the *Diversity Action Plan* are incorporated into the unit's strategic plan/ the unit's strategic plan for diversity.** Although diversity planning will continue to occur in a parallel planning process, units should take advantage of the opportunity to incorporate related elements of their goals and commitments regarding diversity into their appropriate planning documents. What strategies have been employed to make progress, which specific approaches are considered your "signature" diversity initiatives and which could be termed "best practices"? (Best practices are processes, programs, and procedures that most successfully lead to the unit's ability to reach the University's diversity goals and can be validated through measurable outcomes.) Describe these signature and/or best practice initiatives, the metrics by which their success is gauged, and the measurable outcomes.

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The Office of Institutional Planning staff is working to develop a template for this report. Dr. Baxter will share that reporting tool with you in person at the to-be-scheduled spring meeting.

In closing, our future planning efforts includes the launch of a Situational Analysis that will allow us to anticipate and respond to political, social, environmental, and fiscal trends (among others) in a strategic manner. We will be appointing a committee to inform and guide this work in the near future.