

## STANDARD TWO: PLANNING AND EVALUATION

### Description

#### Planning

The University of New Hampshire has undertaken significant planning activities since its last review by NEASC in 2003, both comprehensively as an institution and in individual units within the institution. The [2003 Academic Plan](#) focused exclusively on the university's academic vision and mission and laid out a set of principles by which academic planning should proceed. In 2008, President Mark Huddleston convened an institution-wide planning process designed to bring all aspects of the university's mission, its outreach activities, and its internal and external operations into alignment. The result was the current institution-wide strategic plan, "[The University of New Hampshire in 2020: Breaking Silos, Transforming Lives, Reimagining UNH](#),"



introduced by President Huddleston at a campus forum in February 2010. This plan provides the driving vision for the university.

The Strategic Plan was the result of more than a year's work by hundreds of faculty, staff, students, and business and community leaders, guided by outside strategic planning consultants and designated UNH staff. Following the release of the plan, several individual units revised or updated their own strategic plans to correspond with "UNH in 2020," employing processes that included broad participation from varied constituencies and stakeholders. For example, the [UNH Campus Master Plan](#) is based on a 10-year comprehensive update with annual calibrations, representative committees, and community engagement, review, and approval. Other comprehensive planning processes that took their cues from the Strategic Plan were the [UNH Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan](#) and the [President's Panel on Internationalization](#).

The President's Cabinet and unit-level managers are responsible for ensuring that resources are allocated in line with strategic priorities. Although UNH's budgeting system, Responsibility Center Management (RCM), is highly decentralized, and many resource allocation decisions are, therefore, made at the unit level, the campus responds collectively to changes in the economic landscape through the annual budgeting process. In addition, at regular intervals, a representative committee reviews and revises RCM policies, practices, and key formulas. The most recent review took place in 2010, as noted in the [Approved Changes to RCM](#).

Individual units within the university also undertake regular planning activities. These activities are based on and consistent with the UNH Strategic Plan and Academic Plan. All colleges, the Graduate School, and the UNH Library have created strategic planning documents: [CEPS Strategic Plan](#); [College of Health and Human Services Vision and Strategic Intentions](#); [COLA Strategic Plan](#); [COLSA Strategic Plan](#); [UNH-Manchester strategic plan](#); [Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics \(Paul College/WSBE\)](#);

the [UNH Graduate School Strategic Plan](#); and the [UNH Library Strategic Plan](#). Other examples include the [UNH Cooperative Extension Strategic Plan](#) and the [NH Sea Grant Strategic Plan](#). The [UNH School of Law](#), which completed its [strategic plan](#) in 2013, is in the process of fully integrating into the University of New Hampshire. Extensive planning by Law School integration teams culminated in approvals by the American Bar Association and the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

The university communicates university-wide and unit-level planning processes, completed plans, and progress towards implementation through dedicated sections of the UNH website.

## Evaluation

Evaluation is a prominent focus of the UNH Academic Plan: *"The University constantly assesses everything it does in support of the educational mission: from evaluating and improving its teaching, research, and service programs to developing a master plan to ensure that future academic, residential, and recreational needs are met while preserving the campus's distinctive character and place in the community. Accreditation is another way the University evaluates its strengths and challenges."* We continue to view assessment and evaluation as critical to the university's success, and we perennially seek new ways to gather and use information for continuous improvement.

In 2011, the University System Board of Trustees began dedicating its September Board meeting and retreat to assessing the progress of its four component institutions toward their long-range strategic goals. The 2011 meeting gave UNH the opportunity to confirm and refine the goals outlined in its 2010 strategic plan. In subsequent meetings, the University and Board reviewed progress toward those goals. The Board of Trustees has also empanelled a "Select Committee on Reviewing and Rewarding Chief Executive Officers." This committee developed specific quantitative goals by which to measure the performance of the UNH President.

As noted above, the President's Cabinet is primarily responsible for implementing the strategic plan and assessing the effectiveness of institutional planning and evaluation. (See Standard 3.) The Cabinet uses a software program called "TeamDynamix" to break larger goals into measurable tasks that are assigned, with specific deadlines, to individuals for completion. For example, the Community Resource Mapping ([CRM](#)) [plan](#) and the [CRM Phase I & II](#) show planning efforts by the UNH Information Technology Project Management Office.

UNH's office of [Institutional Research and Assessment](#) (IR&A) coordinates institutional research. IR&A provides timely program management and assessment information to campus and external constituencies. IR&A offers institutional insights, informs issues and decisions, maintains the institutional memory, and ensures data integrity. IR&A provides data from both internal and external sources including, for example, [student](#) and [faculty data](#), cost per credit hour, comparisons with peer institutions, and [performance indicators](#). Some of these data sets are password-protected and will be available in the Team Workroom during the review visit.

[Reviewing academic programs](#) and monitoring student learning continue to be central foci for the Provost, the colleges, and the Faculty Senate. (See Standard 4.) The

university employs a number of ongoing procedures by which to evaluate the achievement of its academic mission and purposes. These include external accreditation reviews of certain programs (e.g., business, nursing, engineering, education) ([example 1](#)) and internal academic program reviews ([example 2](#)). A key focus of the academic program review process is the assessment of student learning. The Provost's office has built and is maintaining a campus-wide database, the Academic Assessment Inventory (AAI) that provides program-specific examples of student learning. (See Standard 4 and E3 data form.) In addition, the Faculty Senate, in conjunction with the Office of the Provost is currently reviewing and updating course evaluation forms and procedures with an eye toward improved capture of evaluations of high impact programs (e.g., Honors, Discovery) and alternative delivery formats (e.g., online courses and programs).

The reorganization of Advancement, and the consolidation of alumni affairs, fund-raising, and university communications have made re-engaging UNH's alumni a high priority. The Alumni Office regularly conducts surveys of recent graduates, and some colleges and individual departments continue to track their graduates as noted in S-form data.

## **Appraisal**

### Planning

As indicated by its various institutional- and unit-level plans, UNH has generally planned well and comprehensively. Some local planning, however, tends to be periodic rather than predictable or regularly scheduled. As a result, some plans at the unit level are out of date. On the other hand, a strength is the continual process improvement work being done by sponsored programs, the registrar, and others. The institution itself has a well-defined mission, a thoughtful strategic direction, and clear goals. A major strength is our significant progress in implementing "The University of New Hampshire in 2020" Strategic Plan. Examples related to three of the plan's "Ten Initiatives" are illustrative of the successes. Review of the Strategic Plan is ongoing.

(1) [Inclusive Excellence](#): In keeping with strategic plan priorities, and based on needs highlighted by diversity data and institutional climate surveys, UNH sought and received a five-year, \$3.47 million National Science Foundation ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant to improve the representation of and climate for women faculty primarily in the STEM disciplines. The [UNH ADVANCE](#) program focuses on recruitment and retention policies, procedures and practices, transparent and equitable review processes, and department chair leadership development to improve department meetings, workload assignments, and department-level climate in general. Program effectiveness will be assessed annually using climate surveys and faculty composition data. Program elements are being implemented by four faculty working groups and overseen by a leadership team, an internal steering committee, and an external advisory board. The program also has an extensive research component revolving around a field experiment designed to assess the impact of professional development interventions.

(2) [Interdisciplinary Schools and Academies](#): Inspired by the strategic plan, and based on a [policy](#) developed by the Faculty Senate, UNH has recently created a new interdisciplinary school, the [School of Marine Science and Ocean Engineering](#), funded by existing marine-related budgets, and is in the process of creating a second interdisciplinary school, the [Carsey School of Public Policy](#), funded by a multi-million-dollar gift from a UNH alumna. Both schools bring together existing areas of UNH strength in research and graduate education to address critical real-world challenges through applied research and the education of future leaders in public policy and the sciences.

(3) [Internationalizing UNH](#): To further the strategic plan's goal of internationalizing the campus, UNH began a partnership in May of 2011 with Navitas, an Australian company that works with universities worldwide to recruit and support international students. The resulting [International University Transfer Program \(Pathway\) at UNH](#) has already added 100 international students, with an eventual goal of 500.

In addition to pursuing planned strategic initiatives, we have responded well to unforeseen financial and political challenges. The most dramatic example was the need to address a sudden 48% reduction in funding from the State of New Hampshire in 2011. This led the Provost to conduct an ad hoc [review of all academic programs](#) to assess priorities and allocate funds appropriately. Two other examples are our current work with the University System to conduct "stress tests" to explore how UNH would respond to other potential sudden "shocks," and a project with an outside consultant to plan for expected demographic declines in the number of students entering college.

UNH's decentralized governance and budgeting structures allow for a great deal of flexibility in terms of planning for and addressing a rapidly changing higher-education landscape; at the same time, localized governance can make central planning, implementation, and assessment challenging, as each unit considers individually the appropriate balance of high-level and long-term priorities for daily operations and short-term demands for resources. The main drawback of such decentralization is that there are fewer resources available at the institutional level to fund university-wide priorities and strategic initiatives. We partially address this challenge by seeking and acquiring funding outside the university's operating budget. For example, we recently garnered \$6.7 million from the University System of New Hampshire to fund initiatives to increase the number of students trained in the STEM disciplines and, as mentioned above, we received a multi-million-dollar gift to create an interdisciplinary school of public policy. These ad hoc successes notwithstanding, we must establish a more stable central funding pool so we can routinely invest in strategic priorities that produce desired outcomes from the strategic plan.

Another area in need of improvement is better coordination of the annual budget planning process with annual unit-level staffing needs assessments and other unit-level planning activities. The existing annual planning and budgeting schedules are currently under review, and a [proposed revision](#), with a more coordinated time sequence, is under consideration.

Finally, two significant planning strengths are in the areas of Facilities and Information Technology, which project well into the future. Our capital planning process

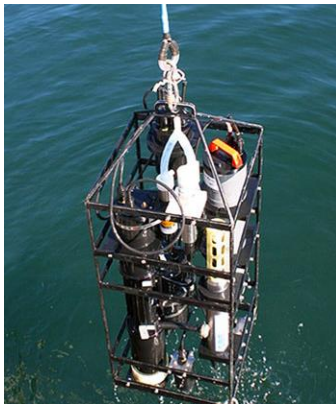
employs a [6-year plan](#), [prioritization by funding type](#), and the incorporation of [individual project planning](#). Similarly, planning for the repair and renovation of the campus infrastructure includes [facility assessments](#). [UNH Information Technology](#) (IT) created its most recent comprehensive [UNH Technology Plan](#) in 2010. In March of 2011, the university completed an “[Information Technology Assessment](#)” and then worked closely with the University System and an outside consultant to complete USNH’s “[Long Range Technology Plan 4.0](#)” in February of 2013. UNH will again update its own Technology Plan in 2014.

## Evaluation

The University regularly reviews the fulfillment of its mission and the effectiveness of its academic and other programs. The Trustees, President’s Cabinet, and other university administrators take seriously their obligation to assess progress toward implementation of university- and unit-level plans. However, there are opportunities for improvement in evaluation at all levels.

The Trustees’ annual review of progress toward implementation of the university’s Strategic Plan has been and will continue to be very useful. The Trustees have been particularly good at developing quantifiable metrics for evaluating UNH’s initiatives and the performance of its administrators. However, the goals could be even better connected to the university’s Strategic Plan and could include some less easily quantifiable goals related to academic innovation and campus culture. Likewise, TeamDyamic, the project-tracking software used by the President’s Cabinet, is extremely valuable for measuring progress toward the university’s many quantifiable goals, but is somewhat less helpful when it comes to tracking those initiatives that require culture shifts.

At the University level, there has not been a campus-wide revisiting of “The University of New Hampshire in 2020” since its creation, nor have we applied multi-stakeholder progress assessments to the plan. Also, as mentioned above, some unit-level strategic plans are out of date, which indicates that evaluation of their implementation is also behind schedule.



Program reviews are very effective tools for illuminating needed changes in academic programs. For example, the external review of UNH’s Theater and Dance Department underscored the department’s need for additional modern dance education. This led to curriculum changes and, in light of increased instructional needs and a shift in workloads, the department hired two more faculty members. Of course, some departments are not able to implement recommended changes due to resource constraints. Some program reviews are behind schedule. To remedy this, the Provost’s office and the Deans’ Council have implemented newly revised program review guidelines, are updating the program review schedule, and have committed to ensuring that all program reviews are completed on time.

Enhancing the assessment of student learning has been a focus at UNH for many years. We have made significant progress, and we are confident that the evolving

Academic Assessment Inventory will yield important data. (See Standard 4.) Also under development is a longitudinal project that tracks the effects of the American Association of Colleges and Universities-designated “high impact” activities on student success and engagement ([document 1](#), [document 2](#), [document 3](#) and [document 4](#)).

Although contact with alumni and assessment of alumni success have been foci of attention in recent years, such contact remains uneven at both the institutional and unit levels. The Alumni Office regularly conducts surveys of recent graduates, but response rates are very low, and efforts by individual units to track their graduates are ad hoc and vary considerably in the quality of the data produced. The University must and will improve in these areas.

In addition to their successes in planning, Facilities and Information Technology are strong in the area of evaluation, continually tracking their progress and acting on data accrued. Facilities’ six-year capital plans are reviewed and revised via two-year updates, and repair and renovation plans are updated via [annual project prioritizations](#) based on regular facilities assessments. IT uses the “[Project Management Book of Knowledge](#)” (PMBOK) framework for all its projects, as well as TeamDynamix for intake, management and tracking of projects to completion.

## **Projections**

By July 1, 2014, the President’s Cabinet will establish a clear schedule for regularly reviewing and updating University-wide and unit-level strategic plans, while re-emphasizing the need for linkage, integration, and consistency.

By the spring semester of 2015, the President will convene a University-wide group to review progress toward and revise “The University of New Hampshire in 2020: Breaking Silos, Transforming Lives, Reimagining UNH.”

By January 2015, relevant UNH units will bring planning-related websites up to date, including those chronicling progress on strategic plan implementation.

By October 2014, the President’s Cabinet will explore revising the Responsibility Center Management budget formulas to regularly allocate additional financial resources to a centrally administered strategic initiatives fund.

By June 2014, the President’s Cabinet will implement an annual planning process that begins with consulting the Strategic Plan and lines up goals for the subsequent year with the budget process and the determining of goals for each unit.

The Discovery Program, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and the Provost’s office will continue to expand and improve the assessment of student learning over the FY 13-15 time period and keep it regularly updated after that.

In 2014, a team from Student and Academic Services and University Advancement will develop a comprehensive university-wide effort to create a regular, scheduled, career and alumni data collection program. This will be implemented in 2015.

## Institutional Effectiveness

The University of New Hampshire is remarkable in its ability to be enormously productive with far fewer resources than many institutions with which it is favorably compared. This success requires creative planning, careful resource allocation, and continuous assessment—all endeavors in which UNH has continued to make progress over the last decade.

The strategic planning process that produced “The University of New Hampshire in 2020” built on what was learned from the creation of its forerunner, the 2003 Academic Plan. Review of the planning process for the Academic Plan led to an increase in the scope of planning to include all university functions and the involvement of many more stakeholders, including several from outside the university. We have also focused on how important it is to align unit-level strategic plans with the institutional plan, especially in an institution where so many of the resources are allocated at the unit level. Readers of the Self Study will see plans and policies described within each standard, across various units. At the same time, we now know we must find a way to retain additional resources centrally to “steer the ship” in the direction of our strategic priorities. Likewise, our experience in attempting to connect our annual planning/budgeting cycle to the strategic plan has taught us that we need to revise scheduling to give administrators sufficient information and time to properly prepare.

These are just a few of the lessons learned from assessing our planning and evaluation processes. Keeping planning and evaluation up-to-date and using what is learned from resulting data to guide decision-making require constant vigilance and continuous revitalization. UNH has shown it can plan and evaluate effectively, and we are committed to significantly improving on our successes to date.

### [STANDARD TWO DATA FIRST FORMS](#)