

Planning Policy

Delaware College of Art and Design

A Creative Partnership of Pratt and the Corcoran

Approved by the Board of Directors,
December 10, 2007

I. Purpose

Strategic change at the Delaware College of Art and Design (DCAD) requires a planning process that ensures it systematically analyzes itself and its external environment. This process shapes identified strengths, opportunities and issues into a strategic plan, transforms strategic plan's initiatives into operating plans, implements those plans through annual action plans and budgets, and monitors and evaluates progress toward the plan's goals and vision.

The purpose of planning at DCAD is to:

- articulate a management philosophy that comprehensively integrates planning, budgeting, and evaluation;
- define clearly decision-making roles and responsibilities of administrative positions and key constituent groups;
- provide the methodologies for planning, budgeting, and evaluation;
- be supported with appropriate policies, information systems, and other mechanisms;
- and,
- communicate recommendations and decisions to appropriate administrators and constituent groups.

II. Planning System Phases

DCAD's comprehensive planning system establishes a planning and management cycle by linking five iterative phases:

- I. Discovery
- II. Strategic Planning
- III. Operating Planning
- IV. Implementation
- V. Evaluation

Phases I and II are typically completed every five to eight years, depending on the planning time horizon selected, while efforts related to Phases III through V are engaged annually. The foundation for planning at DCAD is its mission, with evaluation finalizing the process by focusing on the goals and initiatives of the strategic plan and linking to a new discovery process in the next planning cycle.

Phase I -- Discovery

Discovery initiates a strategic planning cycle by evaluating progress from the last strategic plan, internal strengths and weaknesses, and external threats and opportunities. This phase of comprehensive self-study should be linked to DCAD's accreditation processes to maximize use of its resources. Resulting from this process is a comprehensive inventory of DCAD's resources, its strengths and opportunities, and its opportunities.

Phase II -- Strategic Planning

Strategic Planning molds the results of the discovery process into a vision of where DCAD will be in five years and sets the strategic goals and initiatives needed to achieve that vision. To be effective strategic planning must answer four essential questions:

- Why does DCAD exist? (Mission)
- Where do we want to be in five years? (Vision)
- What can we do to make it happen? (Goals)
- How can we do it? (Initiatives)

Consideration is also given to DCAD's position on its organizational lifecycle and where it should be headed in its lifecycle.

Phase III -- Operating Planning

Operating Planning transforms goals and initiatives set forth in the College's Strategic Plan into strategies and activities. The strategies and activities outlined in an operating plan may include simple tasks that can be completed in under a year, such as designing a process for compiling, publishing, and distributing annually a list of service activities so that DCAD's record of service is better known, as well as complex tasks that span several years, such as the redesign of the core curriculum. Operating plans answer the questions: What are the tasks that support our strategy? When will they be done? Who will do them? What resources are needed (i.e., dollars, space, time, personnel)? When do we expect to complete these tasks? How will we measure the effectiveness of undertaking the task? When will we evaluate it?

Phase IV -- Implementation

Implementation divides the operating plan into annual action plans and budgets. Tasks assigned to a specific year become that year's activities agenda and are integrated into the budget for that year and into the work schedules and volunteer time of the individuals involved.

Phase V -- Evaluation

Evaluation occurs at several levels: when specific tasks related to a strategy are implemented during a year, at the close of a fiscal year, when an operating plan has been completed. Evaluation answers the questions: Did what we did work? How well? What happened? What could we improve? Did our action support the strategy and goal as we intended? Are we closer to achieving our vision and mission as a result of this action? What should we do next?

III. Structure and Staffing

While the Board of Directors has overall responsibility and stewardship for DCAD, the local, advisory Board of Overseers has several standing committees, including Building Committee, Development Committee, Long Range/Strategic Planning Committee, Program and Gallery Events Committee, Nominating Committee, and Public Relations/Marketing Committee. The Long Range/Strategic Planning Committee reports to the Board of Directors on all planning processes and activities and makes recommendations regarding promulgation of new strategic plans and changes to current strategic plans.

As a small institution, DCAD must rely on a limited number of individuals, many of whom are responsible not only for management but also program and service delivery. Institutional standing committees include Academic Review Committee, Disciplinary Committee, Library Committee, and Technology Committee. For the purposes of managing the College's planning system through a planning cycle, a Planning Leadership Committee is charged following the promulgation of a strategic plan. Comprised of the individuals assigned responsibility for each

of the strategic plans goals, it is lead by DCAD's Director/Dean. The Planning Leadership Committee is responsible for overseeing implementation of the strategic plan, recommending changes to the strategic plan during implementation, overseeing the discovery process for the development of a new strategic plan, and facilitating the promulgation of a new strategic plan. With the promulgation of a new strategic plan, a new Planning Leadership Committee is created.

Each Strategic Goal is assigned a Chair who has responsibility for overseeing the implementation and evaluation of the assigned goal and supporting initiatives of the strategic plan. Each Goal Chair, in coordination with others on the Planning Leadership Committee, enlists appropriate faculty, staff, students, volunteers , and, if needed, external constituents to plan, implement, and evaluate each initiative in the assigned goal. The Goal Chair has responsibility for reporting on progress and informing the Planning Leadership Committee if changes to initiatives or the goal are required.

The Chair of the Planning Leadership Committee (the Director/Dean of DCAD) has responsibility for ensuring that progress is made in implementation and evaluation of the strategic plan and reporting the the Long Range/Strategic Planning Committee. The Planning Leadership Committee Chair also has responsibility for keeping the DCAD community informed about all planning activities and progress.

Approximately 18 months to two years prior to the completion of the strategic plan, the Planning Leadership Committee initiates a new Discovery phase to support the development and promulgation of a new strategic plan. To ensure efficient use of DCAD's resources, this Discovery phase should coincide with DCAD's accreditation cycle.

During the Discovery phase, the Planning Leadership Committee has responsibility for establishing and monitoring the work of any needed task forces that will complete the internal self study and the external environmental scan. Task forces should be formed to address, minimally,

- Operations, including governance and administration, resources (library, human, financial, physical, and technological), enrollment management, and communications;

- Programs, including degree and non-degree programs, exhibition and gallery programs, pre-college programs, and community activities;

- Planning Progress, evaluating progress made on the current strategic plan;

- Environmental Scan, considering real and potential changes in DCAD's external environment and context that could have an impact on the institution, its current and potential students, its programs, its resources, its supporters, and its mission.

Membership on the established task forces should reflect appropriate DCAD constituents, including students, institutional supporters, and external community leadership. For overall efficiency, the self study should support assessment of accreditation standards. The Planning Leadership Committee summarizes the work of the task forces into strategic strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and/or threats (issues) which become the foundation for the work of Strategic Planning phase. The Chair of the Planning Leadership Committee may appoint a writer to ensure consistency of style. Prior to initiating the Strategic Planning phase, the Planning Leadership Committee should hold a planning workshop of those who participated in the discovery process and other DCAD constituents who can provide important perspectives, to present and gain consensus on DCAD's strategic strengths, opportunities, and issues.

During the Strategic Planning phase, the Planning Leadership Committee presents the self study and the results of the planning workshop to the Long Range/Strategic Planning

Committee, and together these two committees plan and conduct a Board planning retreat. At this retreat, the Board of Directors, Board of Overseers and the Planning Leadership Committee develop a vision for the College and establish strategic goals and initiatives to be accomplished. The Chair of the Planning Leadership Committee has responsibility for codifying the results of the retreat into the College's strategic plan.

IV. Methodologies

Each phase of the planning cycle is supported by methodologies as follows:

Discovery Methodology

- preparing a plan-to-plan,
- completing a self-study based on DCAD's mission and reflective of accreditation standards,
- completing an environmental scan,
- synthesizing and gaining consensus on DCAD's strengths, opportunities, and issues, and
- communicating these results.

The first step in the Discovery phase is the development of a plan-to-plan by the Planning Leadership Committee. The plan-to-plan should identify:

- organizational structure and constituent participation;
- planning time horizon for the strategic plan; and,
- tools and timelines for Discovery process activities.

This plan-to-plan is shared with the Long Range/Strategic Planning Committee for review and comment.

Completion of the self-study should facilitate DCAD's accreditation processes. Each accrediting agency for DCAD makes available tools to assist its member institutions in their planning and management, and the College should examine these resources as it develops its plan-to-plan and the tools for the discovery process. For example, the National Association of Schools of Art and Design has *Sourcebook for Futures Planning* and *Supplements I, II, III, IV*. These documents are a compendium of methods for analyzing future trends and conditions and their impact on art and design units. Illustrated with charts, the workbook contains planning tools of varying complexity to enable institutions to select portions of particular applicability to their situations and experience. NASAD also has produced *NASAD Executive Summaries*, a loose-leaf series of topical reports designed to distill major themes, trends, and projections into a form that encourages individual reflection and planning institutions of higher education.

Since self-studies can be large documents organized to meet accreditation processes and not planning, the Planning Leadership Committee must synthesize the results of the self-study and the environmental scan into clearly articulated and succinct strategic strengths, opportunities, and issues. Care must be taken to ensure that the issues are strategic and comprehensive.

The Planning Leadership Committee should conduct a workshop involving those who participated in the self-study and environmental scan, as well as other interested constituents,

to ensure consensus on these strengths, opportunities and issues, since they are critical to the formation of a vision for DCAD over the planning period and the development of goals to achieve that vision.

Throughout the Discovery phase, the Chair of the Leadership Planning Committee should inform the College community and the Long Range/Strategic Planning Committee regarding progress on the self-study and environmental scan. Opportunities for input and comment should be provided to ensure thoroughness and build College-wide consensus on strengths, opportunities, and issues.

Strategic Planning Methodology

- preparing a plan-to-plan
- building on DCAD's identified strengths, opportunities, and issues by completing a mission and (optional) constituency review
- completing an assessment of position on DCAD's organizational lifecycle
- creating a vision for DCAD's future and setting key goals and initiatives, and
- communicating these results

The Planning Leadership Committee develops the plan-to-plan with the Long Range/Strategic Planning Committee, including a retreat in which to bring forward the strengths, opportunities, and issues identified in the Discovery phase and in which to brainstorm elements for DCAD's vision statement and draft key goals. A typical planning retreat agenda should share the results of the discovery process and bring shared vision.

The Chair of the Planning Leadership Committee is responsible for drafting the Strategic Plan and having it reviewed by the Planning Leadership Committee and the Long Range/Strategic Planning Committee. Other reviews also may be advised, for example, by the Board of Overseers or planning commissions of the City of Wilmington or the State of Delaware. The Long Range/Strategic Planning Committee has responsibility for recommending acceptance of the strategic plan to the Board of Directors. The Chair of the Planning Leadership Committee has responsibility for promulgating the strategic plan and communicating the action of the Board regarding its approval.

Operating Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation Methodologies

The methodology for implementing the College's strategic plan involves:

- developing and implementing operating plans,
- evaluating implementation, and
- communicating progress.

With the promulgation of a new strategic plan, a new Planning Leadership Committee is constituted, following the assignment of goal responsibility to individuals. The Chair of the Planning Leadership Committee continues to be the Director/Dean.

Developing and Implementing Operating Plans

Translating the strategic plan into specific programs and action requires two types of plans:

- operating plans** addressing strategy development and recommendations and
- action plans** addressing strategy implementation.

Operating plans describe how the College will proceed in accomplishing the goals and initiatives of the vision statement. Operating plans cover the planning time horizon of the strategic plan and outline the goals and initiatives to be addressed, the responsible individual

and the expected onset and completion of strategy development and recommendation. Importantly, operating plans do not represent specific strategies or actions to be implemented. These specific strategies or actions are presented in action plans. Preparing and developing operating and action plans involves five steps:

- Step 1. planning and conducting the work of the Goal Committees;*
- Step 2. preparing planning proposals;*
- Step 3. processing planning proposals;*
- Step 4. preparing action plans from approved planning proposals; and*
- Step 5. preparing annual plans and budgets.*

STEP 1. PLANNING AND CONDUCTING THE WORK OF THE GOAL COMMITTEES

The first task of the Planning Leadership Committee, given the initiation of a Strategic Plan, is the preparation of a five-year (or planning time horizon length) operating plan which identifies the thrust of each Goal Committee and outlines the overall direction of their work. The initial operating plan also must detail the first year's activities: what goals and/or initiatives will be addressed, by whom or what Task Forces, what tasks will be accomplished, and what resources are needed.

Given this overarching operating plan, the Chair of each Goal Committee leads his Committee in planning the Committee's work for two fiscal years. The Committee identifies the strategy development work to be accomplished and identifies who will participate in the Committee's work and the timeframe for completion.

STEP 2. PREPARING PLANNING PROPOSALS

Once a Goal Committee has reached a point where it has sufficiently defined and evaluated strategies to warrant formal consideration by the College and/or Board, a planning proposal should be developed. Planning proposals should reflect the goals and objectives of the strategic plan and identify specific program strategies to accomplish those goals. Importantly, it must include sufficient information for the Planning Leadership Committee and/or other review bodies of the College to review and analyze the proposed change.

In general, planning proposals fall into two categories:

- proposals for new or expanded programs and
- proposals for program reorganization or termination.

STEP 3. PROCESSING PLANNING PROPOSALS

Planning proposals are submitted to the Planning Leadership Committee which has responsibility for assessing each proposal's feasibility, given financial and other resource considerations and its relative priority given other planning proposals and College activities. It also has responsibility for ensuring that appropriate faculty, staff, students, and/or volunteers have the opportunity for review and comment prior to decision-making.

Any proposals requiring Board-level approvals will be submitted by the Director/Dean, following Planning Leadership Committee approvals.

STEP 4. PREPARING ACTION PLANS FROM APPROVED PLANNING PROPOSALS

Once a planning proposal is approved, the individual(s) responsible for implementation prepares an action plan which initiates the program. The action plan delineates the tasks required to implement the program and the timeframe for their initiation and completion. Resource requirements—people, dollars, space, equipment—are then estimated for each task. The action plan may be one year or less in length or may require multiple years to reach full implementation. Importantly the approved planning proposal provides the foundation for the

action plan.

The Planning Leadership Committee has responsibility for overseeing the preparation of action plans and merging them with other action plans into annual action plans and budget allocations. This information is then integrated with the College's budget planning process.

STEP 5. PREPARING ANNUAL PLANS AND BUDGETS

A given year of the approved action plans, combined with the operating plan for that given year and the remaining College activities, provides the basis for developing the College's annual plan and budget. The Director/Dean has responsibility to ensure that the College's budget preparation commits the resources necessary to implement the approved action plans.

Communicating Progress

Communicating progress requires keeping both those involved in the process and the larger College community informed.

Regarding Strategic Initiatives

Chairs of Goal Committees have the responsibility to keep the other members of the Planning Leadership Committee informed as to the plans and progress being made relative to the strategic initiative under their purview. In addition, the Goal Chairs have the responsibility to inform members of their Goal Committee of the work of other Committees.

Regarding Planning Proposals

The Director/Dean and the other members of the Planning Leadership Committee will consider all comments and recommendations regarding a given planning proposal and reach a decision. Such decisions may be approved, approved with modification, or disapproved.

On behalf of the Planning Leadership Committee, the Director/Dean will inform the proposal initiator and any appropriate College-level faculty, staff, or student representative body of the decision in writing. If the decision involves a modification of the planning proposal, the modification(s) to be made will be described, as well as the rationale for it. If the planning proposal is not approved, reasons for the disapproval must be communicated.

For proposals requiring Board approvals, the Director/Dean will be responsible for communicating in writing to the appropriate College constituents of actions taken.

Regarding Strategic Planning Progress

Periodically the Director/Dean, as the Chair of the Planning Leadership Committee, will inform the College community regarding progress being made toward accomplishing the strategic goals set forth in the strategic plan. Optimal times for College-wide communications would include: at submission of the College's budget planning report to the Board and following the completion of comprehensive goal evaluations.

Evaluating Implementation

Evaluation answers several questions: Did what we do work? How well? What happened? What could we improve? Did our action support the strategy and goal as we intended? Are we closer to achieving our Vision and Mission as a result of our activities? What should we do next?

The Planning Leadership Committee has responsibility for evaluating implementation of the strategic plan at three levels: implementation of specific action plans on an annual basis, implementation of the operating plans of the Goal Committees, and overall progress toward implementation of the strategic plan.

Once a planning proposal has been approved, the Planning Leadership Committee assumes responsibility for evaluating its annual implementation progress. Evaluative criteria from the planning proposal should identify the standards by which the program should be reviewed. If the strategy being implemented does not substantially contribute to progress in the committed timeframe, the Planning Leadership Committee, under the direction of the Director/Dean, must take corrective action.

The Planning Leadership Committee must also ensure that the operating plans of the Goal Committees continue to make progress in strategy development and recommendation. Periodically the Planning Leadership Committee should receive verbal reports from each Committee Chair on Committee activities and progress, and annually it should receive written report evaluating Committee progress and presenting Committee operating plans.

Finally, the Planning Leadership Committee must monitor overall progress in implementing the initiatives of the strategic plan. Importantly, this Committee must be also sensitive and responsive to factors external to the College which may require reconsideration of the strategic plan and its priorities. The Planning Leadership Committee may also have to replan the five-year operating plan to accommodate changes resulting from these external factors and the progress of the Goal Committees.

Integrating the College’s Planning and Budgeting Cycles

To insure that implementation of the strategic plan will have maximal impact, the College must establish planning timelines that are integrated with the College's budgeting cycle. Planning the work of the Goal Committees and their development of operating plans should take be coordinated with these two cycles. The following table summarizes an integrated timetable for College planning and budgeting, representing the general process.

Annual Timetable for College Planning and Budgeting

Date	Unit	Activity
SEP	DIR/DEAN	Director/Dean reviews the operating plans developed by the Goal Committees.
OCT-NOV	PLC	Steering Committee reviews implementation evaluations and recently approved planning proposals for impact and inclusion into next FY budget.
DEC	DIR F&O	The Director of Finance and Operations prepares draft of the two-year budget for review by the Planning Leadership Committee.
JAN	DIR/DEAN	Director/Dean submits budget planning report.
MAR	PLC	The Planning Leadership Committee meets to develop an operational plan for the next two fiscal years, taking into account the projected budget allocation and making preparations for initiating any needed Task Forces.
MAR	DIR F&O	The Director of Finance and Operations reviews approved action plans and prepares budget plans for the next two fiscal years.
MAY	PLC	The Planning Leadership Committee reviews goals progress and prepares operating plans for the next two fiscal years.
JUN	BOARD	The Board of Directors establishes the College's base budget for the next fiscal year.
JUN	PLC	The Planning Leadership Committee conducts annual evaluation of strategic plan implementation activities and prepares impact report.