



LIGHTHOUSE
COUNSEL

Strategic Positioning and Strategic Planning

CUNY MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE

AUGUST 26, 2022

Agenda

- Overview of Strategic Planning Approach
 - Strategy vs. Planning
 - Strategic Positioning
 - Why Plan
 - Strategic Plan Components
 - Terminology Examples
 - Strategic Planning Process and Timeline
- The Planning Context
 - Driving Forces – External and Internal
 - MEC's Big Questions

Strategy vs. Planning

Strategy

- “a coordinated set of actions aimed at creating and sustaining a ***competitive advantage*** in carrying out the mission”

Planning

“the process of making plans – deciding in advance, what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and who should do it – this bridges the gap from where the organization is to where it wants to be”

Strategic Positioning

A strategic position is the location of your college in relation to peers, aspirational peers and competitors.

- Where do you stand?
- Who else does what you do?
- Where else do your applicants go?
- Who else commands the attention of your stakeholders?

What makes you distinctive?

- How will you stand out?

Why Are You Doing This?

- To provide ***direction*** for programmatic and budgetary decisions
- To establish the ***credibility*** of those decisions
- To guide the ***alignment*** of the goals of the various parts of the organization
- To realize your vision and ***become*** what you hope to be
- To establish your ***desired position*** in the market

Strategic Plan Components

A strategic plan is a *means to an end*. That end is realizing your vision by finding and holding your strategic position.

- Context – the environment in which plan is being developed , your current position
- Mission – Identity – Who you are
- Vision – Where you want to go next – Desired future position
- Strategic Commitments – General statement of how you will get from current state to vision
- Goals – specific measurable action that, if achieved, will bring you to your strategic position.
- Activities - undertaken to accomplish your goals
- Assessment plan – track, measure and course correction
- Communication plan – comprehensive, multi-media, ongoing campaign to ensure the plan informs the work of the university

Terminology Examples

Strategic Commitment

- General statement
 - Example: We will grow enrollments

Goals

- Specific and Measurable
 - Example: We will increase Fall to Fall retention by 15%

Activities

- What we will do to achieve our goal
 - Example: We will institute an early warning system for first year students

Strategic Planning Process Steps

<i>Getting started</i>	Gathering relevant materials Establishing working groups
<i>Campus involvement</i>	Strategic Planning Stakeholder meetings
<i>Addressing first questions</i>	Developing initial positioning ideas; communicating and testing them with constituencies
<i>Framing and aligning the strategy</i>	Mission, Vision, Strategic Commitments and Goals
<i>Planning the path</i>	Formulate activities for each goal
<i>Setting a course of action</i>	Determine responsibilities and timelines
<i>Beginning the journey</i>	Document and communicate the plan

Strategic Planning Timeline

Month/Semester	Activity
Fall 2021	SWOT Analysis/Stakeholders Conference
Spring /Summer 2022	Strategic Planning Survey/ Steering Committee Formed
August/September 2022	Focus Groups conducted, Mission, Vision, Strategic Commitments drafted
October 2022	Goals and Activities Drafted
November 2022	Preliminary and Final Drafts Developed
December 2022	Final Draft edited and submitted for review and approvals

Questions?

The Planning Context

A LOOK AT THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT AND FORCES DRIVING THE
NEED FOR CHANGE

Driving Forces - External

- Post Covid-19 Pandemic Disruption
 - Ongoing demand for flexibility following the “successful” pivot to remote instruction in 2020 (hybrid classes and work schedules, pass/fail grading, remote access to services)
 - Stress on emotional well-being of students, faculty and staff
 - Increased financial stress from enrollment declines and increased operating expenses
- Declining Undergraduate Enrollment
 - Pre-pandemic, 2009-2019, US Undergraduate Enrollment declined 8.4% (IPEDS)
 - During the pandemic, November 2019 – November 2021, total undergraduate enrollment declined 7.8%, with Freshman enrollment experiencing the biggest decline of 13.1% during this period (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center)
 - Graduate Enrollment – increased by 4.6% in Spring 2021 but down by .8% in Spring 2022

Driving Forces - External

- Projected decline in High School Graduates – “Enrollment Cliff”
 - Number of US Public High School graduates expected to fall 10.2% between 2026 and 2037
 - In New York State, total number of African-American High School graduates (public and private schools) expected to decline by 30% between 2019 and 2036 (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, WICHE); However, % of multi-racial students increasing
- In NYC, adult population growing - between 2010 and 2019, population age 25-29 increased by 8.5% and population age 30-34 increased by 11.6% (US Census data)
- 2022 Gallup/Lumina Survey found:
 - Forty-four percent(44%) of U.S. adults who are not currently enrolled in a college degree or certificate program report that they have considered enrolling in the past two years
 - Black and Multi-racial adults are most likely to report they have considered re-enrolling at 51% (State of Higher Education 2022 Report, Gallup/Lumina)

Driving Forces - External

- Increased competition from non- traditional providers
 - Micro-credentials
 - Apprenticeships
 - Boot Camps
 - Competency-based programs
- Many employers dropping requirement of college degree due to labor shortages
- New approaches to tuition pricing and financing a degree
 - Subscriptions – Coursera Plus
 - Income Share Agreements
- Mergers and Acquisitions
 - For-Profit with Non- Profit – Purdue Global
 - Consolidations
 - Partnerships

Driving Forces - External

- Political Polarization
 - Interference in hiring and internal decision-making
 - Threats to academic freedom and free- speech mounting
 - Student Activism
- Increased focus on equity and outcomes vs. access
 - Pressure to demonstrate the value of a college degree
 - Employers seek evidence of essential skills
 - Focus on reducing racial gaps and increasing economic and social mobility
- Heightened attention to Minority-Serving Institutions – Nationally/State
- CUNY Strategic Planning, Mandates and Initiatives

Driving Forces - Internal

- Leadership Transition
 - New President, March 2021
 - New Provost, August 2022
- Reaccreditation Visit Approaching
- Strong History/Legacy – Medgar Evers
 - Created to serve the community
 - Brooklyn location near Botanical Gardens and Museum
 - Social Justice focus
- CUNY Senior College with Associate Degree Programs
 - Pipeline for Majors
 - Serve students with promise – provide access to higher education

Driving Forces - Internal

- Financial Pressure
 - Enrollment Decline
 - Pandemic related expenses
 - Increasing inflation
 - Heavy Reliance on Government Funding (local, state and federal)
- Reputational Risks
 - Student Outcomes – retention, persistence and graduation rates low
 - Internal conflict reported in the media – former President
 - Maintaining Relevance and Currency in the Curriculum
- Operational Challenges (from SWOT Analysis)
 - Staffing – getting right people in right positions
 - Bureaucracy – modernizing and streamlining
 - Organizational Structure

Strategic Planning Survey Results

1. Factors Important to MEC's Mission and Distinctive Characteristics

Most Important	Least Important
Quality of Instruction	Convenient Location
Supportive Faculty and Staff	Predominantly Black Institution (PBI)
Professional and Career-Oriented Programs	
Values-driven education – Social Justice	

Strategic Planning Survey Results

2. What You Would Like to Say in 5 Years that Can't Say Today

Themes:

- Improved Curriculum – more relevant, current, and competitive programs; more graduate and online programs
- Increased enrollment and improved student success outcomes – better retention, persistence, graduation, and professional employment rates
- Improved Campus Culture – people, policies, processes, and politics are all aligned to support the mission; better place to work; more transparency and respect
- Better Reputation – within CUNY, within the local community, recognized for serving target population well, leader in social justice, college of choice
- Improved Facilities, Infrastructure and Technology – more state-of-the-art classrooms and technology, adequate space for programs, well-trained and competent staff, well-maintained facilities
- Better Funding – more support for student scholarships, faculty research and professional development

Strategic Planning Survey Results

3. Trends Representing the Greatest Challenge for MEC

Top Challenges	Bottom Challenges
Maintaining Enrollment	Cost of MEC Education
Improving Student Persistence and Completion	Campus Policing
Improving Employee Morale	Adapting to Student Activism
Competition with the job market/other colleges	Addressing sexual harassment and sexual assault

Strategic Planning Survey Results

4. Trends Representing the Greatest Opportunity for MEC

Top Opportunities	Bottom Opportunities
Improve Student Persistence and Completion	Becoming a Model for Campus Policing
Create New Degree Programs to Attract New Students	Becoming a Model for Addressing Sexual Harassment
Communicate the value of a MEC education	Increasing campus-based childcare
Expand Course Schedule to Better Meet Student Needs	
Improving Employee Morale	

MEC's Big Question

- How will Medgar Evers College position itself to thrive in the current competitive environment?
 - Predominantly Black Institution? – 85% of students, highest in CUNY
 - Adult Students? – Well above Senior College Average in CUNY
 - Career Readiness? – High percentage STEM students, High Employment in NYS after graduation with competitive salaries
 - Distinctive Curricular Approach

Source: CUNY Performance Management Report, 2021 Data Book

Questions?
