

Guidance for CALS Departmental Five-Year Planning

Departmental five-year plans are an approach to thinking strategically about the future. The plans are intended to help maintain robust departments, while also helping the college attain its goals. Each department in the college must develop a five-year plan in the fall of FY19. Departments with a concept to merge, approved by the Dean's Office should develop a joint Five-Year Plan. Departments forming a collaborative must work together to identify strategies and actions that comprise larger collaborative efforts – these will be consistent within each department's plan.

Departments should consult five-year plans on a regular basis to guide activities and make decisions. Completion of actions and performance measures should be monitored throughout the year to ensure departmental progress is being made to meet goals. The Dean's Office will use the plans to provide feedback on department priorities, guide resource allocation decisions, shape annual departmental meeting discussions, inform college-level planning, aid in reporting to campus, and advise on overall departmental success.

Departments should update five-year plans annually. The Dean's Office will review plans every January, in advance of the annual department meetings that take place early in the spring semester.

Note: These plans differ from proposals for merging or forming a collaborative. A five-year plan is a long-term planning tool, rather than documentation of organizational restructuring.

Timeline for Developing Five-Year Plans

Below is a timeline for developing the first department five-year plans.

May 2018: Department chairs provide feedback on the draft five-year plan template and guidance document.

August 1, 2018: Final five-year plan templates and guidance are distributed to departments.

December 31, 2018: Five-year plans are due to the Dean's Office.

January - February 2019: Five-year plans are reviewed by the Dean's Office and discussed at annual department meetings.

Components of a Five-Year Plan

The five-year plan includes a brief description of the department, as well as its mission, vision, goals, strategies, action plans, performance measures and resource outlook. Preceding this is also a page that provides a brief overview of any collaborative a department has joined. This section of the guidance document provides an overview of each component of the plan. Additional resources for developing these components will be provided with the final plan template.

Collaborative & Department Overviews

This section of the five-year plan provides a brief background and history of existing departments, no more than a few paragraphs, as well as the proposed structure of the new structures, if applicable. This section includes the following types of information:

- Founding date, enrollment, and faculty trends of existing departments
- Proposed size and composition of the merged department or collaborative, if applicable
- Undergraduate programs now offered and any planned changes
- Research focus areas
- Significant affiliations
- Signature extension efforts
- Other points of pride

It is likely that the department already has “about us” language that could contribute to the department overview.

Mission Statement

A department’s mission statement briefly describes its core purpose, in essence the department’s reason for existence. A mission statement is meant to remain consistent over time and highlights whom the department serves, what it provides these individuals, and the outcomes it is trying to achieve through its work. Departments should indicate when their mission statement was written (if new) or most recently revised. The same approach applies to documenting a collaborative’s mission statement.

Vision Statement

A department’s vision briefly describes its big-picture desired state, something that a department strives towards over time; an idealistic yet attainable picture of what the department hopes to be five years from now. Departments should indicate when their vision statement was written or revised. The same approach applies to documenting a collaborative vision statement.

Goals

The goals outlined in the five-year plan derive from the *Desired Outcomes for Achieving Robust Departments* document shared with departments earlier this year. Each goal is accompanied in the five-year plan by a description. CALS has prepopulated the template with some language defining what each goal means, and why it is important to the college. However, departments are asked to add language defining what the goal means from their perspective as well.

The two exceptions to this are Goal 7: Enhance Collaboration on Shared Priorities and Goal 8: Increase Revenue Generating Activities. Because these goals overlap with the others, the strategies, actions and measures of Goals 7-8 will be embedded within Goals 1-6. When preparing the five-year plan, Departments in a collaborative should summarize their joint strategies, actions and measures in the final section of the five-year plan. Likewise, all departments should restate the strategies, actions and measures for revenue generation in the template under Goal 8. Departments are free to add additional goals to the end of their five-year plan should they wish to do so; however, this is not required.

Strategies

Departments are asked to identify the strategies they will take to achieve each goal. As an example, a strategy for strengthening academic programs may be to increase undergraduate course offerings, which could be done through a variety of actions. As another example, a strategy to enhance a research program might be to procure additional greenhouse capacity. The five-year plan template includes rows for three strategies per goal. Departments should add or remove rows from the template depending on the number of strategies they have identified.

Action Plans

Each strategy will be accompanied by a list of associated actions the department will take to achieve the goal. Each action should include a brief description, targeted start and completion dates, and who within the department will oversee the effort. Departments should also specify whether the action is part of a collaborative effort. For instance, in the example of procuring additional greenhouse capacity referenced above, associated actions might be to quantify the amount of additional space needed, find a suitable site, identify funding sources, etc. The five-year plan template includes rows for three actions per strategy. Departments should add or remove rows from the template depending on the number of actions they have identified.

Performance Measures

Each goal will also have performance measures for tracking progress, and each performance measure should have a five-year target. Annual targets are also encouraged. While a few performance measures have been pre-populated into the template, departments have the opportunity to add additional performance measures and targets unique to the department.

Resources Outlook

At the end of each five-year plan, departments are asked to speak to their priorities for utilizing resources that might become available over the next five years.

Collaborative Five-Year Plan

To demonstrate that the department has worked with its collaborative partners on a long-term plan for addressing shared priorities, departments in a collaborative are asked to summarize their five-year plan for the collaborative using relevant content from their department five-year plans. This section should be the same for all departments in a collaborative.

Best Practices for Developing Five-Year Plans

A few best practices have been identified for development of five-year plans.

Committee Approach to Five-Year Planning

Departments should form a five-year planning committee comprised of faculty and staff, and charge it with proposing content for the plan. Departments may also elect to form a subcommittee for each goal within the

five-year plan. When taking the committee approach to five-year planning, an open and transparent process offers opportunities for input and feedback from all faculty and staff along the way.

Assigning a Project Manager

In many ways, the development of a five-year plan is a project. As a result, it is important to have a plan for managing the development of the plan. Assigning a project manager to the planning efforts can help keep things on time and on task. In most cases, this will be a faculty or staff member in the department.

Leverage Available Resources

The Office of Strategic Consulting offers/provides a variety of best practices for developing a mission, vision, goals, strategies, action plans, and performance measures. Departments are encouraged to use these resources to help aid the planning process.

Collaborate Early and Often

Departments in a collaborative or planning a merger must work closely with each other as they develop their individual departmental plans to identify joint strategies and actions. The joint strategies and actions should be the same for the departments within a collaborative. Departments in a collaborative may wish to form a committee to identify strategies and actions the collaborative will pursue to achieve the goals. Partners within a collaborative should also consider collaborative mission and vision statements.

Even departments not in a collaborative may wish to share best practices for developing their five-year plans and collaborate on some strategies and actions.