



# Louisiana State University

*Office of Academic Affairs*

March 19, 2002

*From:* Daniel Fogel, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost  
*To:* Vice Chancellors, Deans & Directors, Chairs and Heads  
*Subject:* Performance Updates and Strategic Plan Revisions (Deadlines May 30 & June 15)

## The Strategic Planning Cycle

*Planning → Resource Allocation → Implementation → Assessment → Planning → Resource Allocation → ...*

Please etch the following two items on your agendas for the spring semester. First, once again, we are calling for submission of electronic performance updates (along with any appropriate revisions to unit plans) by **May 30** from units below the level of vice chancellors and deans and by **June 15** from deans and vice chancellors. Second, academic units and units in Student Life and Academic Services concerned with student development must include in their plans at least one objective concerned with the development of ongoing programs for assessing student outcomes.

We have reached a critical moment in efforts at LSU to promote the highest levels of institutional effectiveness, a moment that can perhaps most succinctly be framed in terms of the impending process of reaffirmation of accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Ten years ago, the recommendations that came out of a faculty-driven self-study developed in preparation for reaffirmation, reinforced by the recommendations of the SACS site team in the spring of 1995, led directly to the reorganization of the central administration at LSU, to the establishment of cyclical program review, to the implementation of the planning process in which we have been engaged since 1997, and to a still developing understanding of the ways in which planning, assessment, implementation, and resource allocation must proceed in a continuous, well-articulated cycle. (All self-study and SACS recommendations are available on the LSU website through SACS link on the Academic Affairs homepage)

Alumni Professor Teresa Summers has accepted the role of Director of Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness. Because we believe that the process must once again be faculty-centered and faculty-driven, Professor Summers has assembled a group of senior faculty to serve as an Advanced Planning Leadership Team to deliberate on how we will proceed in light of the new SACS *Principles of Accreditation*, which mandate a process that departs significantly from the one we followed a decade ago.

Two recent events underscore the ways in which our collaborative efforts to build institutional effectiveness at LSU through program review, strategic planning, and assessment are maturing and coalescing, both in the minds of members of the community and in practice. First, a recent Provost's Seminar on assessment of student learning outcomes went a long way toward illuminating for many colleagues how we may

effectively (and cost-effectively) gauge student academic achievement at the program level. As academic departments and selected SLAS units review plans and consider whether revisions are called for, they should make sure that they have included at least one objective aimed at developing an ongoing process and set of methodologies for assessing student learning outcomes. (The actual measures and methodologies for gauging student achievement should probably be relegated to a separate assessment plan).

Second, also recently, a committee convened in response to a Faculty Senate resolution calling for the development of new policies for the evaluation of administrators came to rapid agreement that the centerpiece of evaluation ought to be accountability for effective implementation of strategic plans developed through the active collaboration of faculty, department chairs/heads, and deans. This faculty consensus, which will be embodied in the report the committee will make to the Faculty Senate later this spring, strongly supports the view set forth a year ago in the annual call for performance updates:

Unit plans belong to the faculty and staff who have created them. While Chancellor Emmert and I are committed to the ongoing development and maintenance of the framework and calendars essential to a coordinated campus-wide planning process, we have followed the advice of the University Planning Council in delegating response to unit plans to the deans and vice chancellors. We expect them to assess the plans and performance updates developed by the units reporting to them and to evaluate those units accordingly. We also expect faculty and staff to be actively engaged in planning and to hold themselves and their leaders accountable for the quality of planning and implementation in each unit, college and school, and division of the University.

In a separate memo, we will provide a concise commentary on the items required in performance updates as well as information on support and workshops available for departmental planners and assessment coordinators. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any questions about the specific requirements for performance updates and plan revisions this spring or about the planning process in general.