



Grace School of Theology
Institutional Effectiveness Program Plan

2012-2013

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Mission

Grace School of Theology is an evangelical Christian institution of higher learning and has as its purpose the offering of programs of study leading to certificates and graduate degrees in an environment where academic excellence is emphasized and a biblically based perspective is maintained. Grace is committed to enriching its students' lives spiritually, intellectually, and professionally, and to preparing students to serve God in a global and culturally diverse society.

Vision Statement

Grace School of Theology will be the premier seminary that prepares the next generation to globally communicate the Gospel of Free Grace.

The gospel of free grace is the offer of eternal salvation to all men through faith alone in Christ alone. This gift is unencumbered by any works before, during, or after the point of salvation.

Core Values

- Grace School of Theology is committed to and intentional about our Christian faith.
- Grace School of Theology will freely and responsibly teach the Truth of the Gospel.
- Grace School of Theology strives for excellence.
- Grace School of Theology believes in the importance and cultivation of Christian character.
- Grace School of Theology believes in impacting and changing the world for Christ.
- Grace School of Theology believes in and affirms God's free gift of grace for mankind.

Purpose and Objectives

Grace School of Theology is committed to living, learning, and worshipping as a community of faith based upon the grace of God. Through the faculty, staff, administration, and trustees Grace strives to lead students to a correct understanding of doctrine with necessary skills to communicate the Truth. We live by the spirit of God to love one another, to challenge one another for greater growth in the Lord, and to walk together with integrity in this world. Grace School of Theology seeks to prepare others to proclaim God's Truth courageously to a world that is in need of hope. We want to glorify God by walking in God's grace, ministering God's Word, and equipping God's people.

As an academic community of faith, Grace seeks to guide students:

1. To develop a personal Christian philosophy of service and an ethical and spiritual commitment which is based upon and examined in the light of biblical revelation.
2. To grow in an understanding of the Word of God that is textually based, theologically consistent, and scripturally sound.
3. To develop effectiveness in the use and understanding of communications, both written and spoken, employing analytical and logical thinking in the process.
4. To become a contributor to God's kingdom in a manner consistent with historical, conservative, evangelical Christian principles, leading and participating responsibly in local church, community, and world affairs.
5. To accurately handle the Word of God in ministries appropriate to their calling.
6. To grow in understanding, appreciation, and application of biblical exegesis, biblical and systematic theology, biblical interpretation, hermeneutics, history, the church, and global ministry opportunities.
7. To prepare students to make life long commitments and investments of their lives in Christian ministries.
8. To prepare students for continuing study by becoming acquainted with electronic technology resources and methods of scholarly research.

Philosophy of Education

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God and was given the responsibility of caring for all things that God has created (Genesis 1:27). We believe that all people have many abilities and that we need to help them to develop these God-given talents. These principles apply equally to men and women, young and old.

Because of our high calling, we need to excel in all educational programs, providing a systematic and comprehensive training in the Word of God from a Cristo-centric perspective. Therefore, it is imperative to have professors and staff that are competent in their respective fields, who receive evaluation regularly, and who constantly seek ways to improve professional skills.

Our Christian philosophy is reflected in the Bible-centered curriculum taught by well-trained and dedicated Christian professors. Our faculty uses textbooks authored by scholarly writers that maintain a commitment to the Bible as the divinely revealed guide for all people.

The faculty teach and students study without fear of their academic freedom being violated and without fear of any kind of discrimination. Each student is granted the right to learn, to inquire, and to explore without restraint. This freedom is guaranteed when a corresponding liberty of instruction is granted to instructors. These rights are extended to the student and faculty members within the parameters of sound scholarship and

within the appropriate framework of Biblical foundations and institutional sphere granted by the Board of Trustees.

Ethical Values and Standards

Grace School of Theology is an institution that emphasizes the importance of the Christian perspective in all of its academic endeavors. At the heart of its mission and purposes is the School's commitment to the values and principles of the Christian faith through grace. By accepting the identity of being Christian, Grace makes both explicit and implicit promises about the relationship between its words and actions. This means that integrity defines the very core of its existence as an institution of higher learning.

Grace recognizes that it must demonstrate integrity in its practices and relationships. It is necessary that the School be able to show not only that it has policies and procedures, but also that those policies and procedures reflect the values and practices of its mission.

Grace demonstrates integrity by its classroom performance, public representations, distribution of information, business practices, contractual arrangements, and relationships with internal and external constituencies. We adhere to the code of ethics accepted by the academic community as well as its specific standards of Christian behavior.

Academic integrity is inherent in the nature of our educational tasks. This is reflected not only in the unique relationship between faculty and student but in the manner in which the School represents itself to the public. Grace identifies itself as an evangelical Christian institution of higher learning, which indicates that the academic programs are developed and implemented for a perspective that is distinctly Christian. Grace believes this perspective is consistently expressed in its written documents, academic programs, and in the conduct of its faculty, staff, administration, and students.

Every faculty, staff, and administrator at Grace is required to be a Christian in practice and belief and must give a statement of faith as part of the overall interview process for employment consideration. Students are informed about the ethics and values of Grace and agree to abide by the codes of conduct as described in the Student Handbook. Grace believes that Christian values and practices form the basis of all academic and administrative departments.

Strategic Initiatives

Initiative #1: *Ensure that the Free-Grace Gospel distinctive remains integrated across the institution*

1. Each Academic Program integrates *Free Grace Theology* in all curricula.
2. Each Student Services Program integrates *Free Grace* principles.
3. *Grace Theology Press* publishes scholarly works consistent with *Free Grace Theology*.

Initiative #2: *Attain and Maintain External Validations*

1. Attain Full Accreditation with TRACS by 2013.
2. Attain SEVIS approval by ICE by 2013.
3. Attain Candidacy with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) by 2015.
4. Attain graduation and job placement rates exceeding national norms.
5. Maintain ECFA Financial Accreditation.

Initiative #3 (Affordability): *Enhance Advancement and Financial Stability*

1. Appropriately Staff the Advancement Team
2. Improve and solidify *Grace's* external image and position.
3. Enhance and extend the *Grace* branding and marketing through social media.
4. Broaden the donor base.
5. Improve the *Donations to Tuition/Fee Ratio*.
6. Continue to grow the strategic cash reserve fund and the endowment fund.

Initiative #4 (ACCESSIBILITY): *Expand Grace's Reach Globally*

1. Aggressively market online programs.
2. Place teaching sites in strategic national and international locations.
3. Conduct feasibility studies for branch campuses.
4. Have at least one student from every nation in the world by 2017.

Initiative #5 (MENTORING): *Increase Student Enrollment & Retention*

1. Expand recruiting, nationally and internationally.
2. Implement aggressive strategies to attain retention rates exceeding national norms.
3. Develop strategic partnerships with feeder institutions and ministries.
4. Add VA, TA, Title-IV and F-1 Student visa (SEVIS).

Initiative #6: *Expand Grace's Academic Offerings*

1. Add D.Min. & Ph.D. programs before 2016.
2. Equip potential students to enter graduate programs.
3. Selectively develop concentrations, minors, and majors in key programs.

4. Conduct feasibility studies for adding various Grace academic programs in other languages.

Initiative #7: *Acquire Distinctive, Permanent Main Campus Facilities in the Greater Houston Area*

1. Acquire centralized, state-of-the-art facilities by 2017.
2. Grow and expand library collections and resources.

Initiative #8: *Develop a Presidential Succession Plan*

1. Develop an appropriate and efficient presidential succession/recruitment plan.

Initiative #9: *Plan for Spiritual Defense of the Institution*

1. Develop a system of spiritual accountability.
2. Develop a spiritual self-assessment inventory.

Section I: Background

Staff in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness developed the Institutional Effectiveness Resource Manual (Manual) through consultation with the Academic Department, Student Services Department, Marketing Department and the Registrar's Office. The overall goal of the Manual is to guide and enable a strong, integrated, campus-wide effectiveness and assessment process that adds to quality of teaching, learning, and institutional effectiveness. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness intends for the Manual to help faculty, academic administrators, and executive leadership to develop and use effectiveness and assessment plans at every level within Grace School of Theology (GRACE). Furthermore, this Manual will assist those responsible for assessment in developing their annual assessment reports.

Questions about the Manual should be directed to Dr. Robert Miller, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, bmiller@gsot.org or Diana Smith, Assessment Coordinator, dsmith@gsot.org.

Section II: Institutional Effectiveness Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at Grace School of Theology is to support and implement the mission, vision, and goals through the purposeful, systematic collection of information. The analyzed data will be used to interpret, measure, and continuously improve the effectiveness of the seminary's programs, policies, and practices.

Grace is fully committed to the need for and value of ongoing, continuous self-evaluation. Assessment activities, policies, and procedures include and are approved by the Board of Trustees.

Section III: Introduction

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness designed the Institutional Effectiveness Program Plan for Grace School of Theology to guide the assessment process and to contribute to our understanding of how well we are accomplishing the academic, administrative, and strategic goals of the school. The underlying belief about assessment at Grace is that only through school and departmental involvement and their resulting commitment to a continuing assessment process can the educational goals and mission of the institution be accomplished.

Assessment provides evidence of how well the seminary is fulfilling its mission, and helps identify areas for improvement. Three major assessment criteria are addressed by our annual assessment reports: (a) program improvement; (b) accountability; and (c) the satisfaction of students. A comprehensive institutional assessment program supports continuous improvement of programs and services of the seminary, containing studies related to program reviews and direct assessments of outcomes from major areas of institutional interest. These activities may include surveys from students, faculty, staff, alumni, employers, and board members. Units of assessment range from individual academic and service programs to the overall university.

Section IV: Institutional Planning and Assessment Processes and Measures

Institutional Effectiveness (IE) at Grace School of Theology (GRACE) has four key elements:

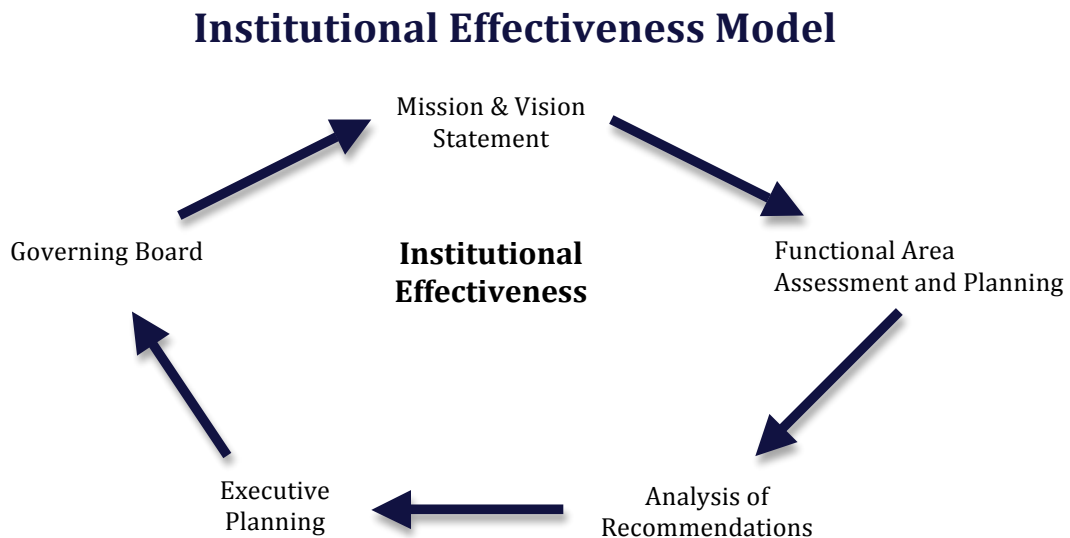
- A. Functional Area Assessment and Planning
- B. Analysis of Recommendations
- C. Executive Planning
- D. Governing Board

Faculty and staff assessments by functional area or department are conducted July-December annually. Instruments include surveys, SWOT analysis, self and departmental assessments, peer reviews, and comparative Seminary reviews. Each functional area reviews data, provides summary analysis, recommends goals, and estimates potential budget needs.

Upon implementation of the collection of data and analysis, the departmental supervisor reviews summaries including goal and budget recommendations. Then

the President of Grace and the Executive Team engage in strategic planning. Planning and budgeting are based upon the visionary leadership of the President and input from the institution's vice presidents who are charged with the responsibility of departmental recommendations. Data collection, analysis, goals, and budgets comprise the executive planning process from January through May of each year.

GRACE's institutional effectiveness process integrates the institutional mission with planning and assessment. A primary purpose of GRACE's IE process is to assure that plans are developed based on institutional goals consistent with the institutions mission, as well as an annual systematic process of planning and evaluation that guides decision making. An additional goal of the IE process is to assure that the planning and budget development process incorporates evidence cited in the annual assessment reports. The diagram below illustrates the main goal of the Institutional Effectiveness Model (IEM): Institutional Effectiveness is guided by a focus on GRACE's mission, the development and refinement of goals and outcomes, an ongoing cycle of planning and assessment, planning and budgeting, and use of results for continuous improvement.



Section V: Functional Areas

A. Administration

Each department reviews the Foundational Statements including the Doctrinal Statement, Purpose and Objectives, Education Philosophy, and Ethical and Moral Value Statements as they relate to department functions and goals.

Recommendations from reviews are submitted to the Executive Leadership Team for review and analysis. Recommendations from the Executive Leadership are to be submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration. The formal cycle of foundational statement reviews is conducted every odd numbered year in September.

Each department reviews their specific departmental procedures, policies and publications every January. Changes are then submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval. Necessary changes are also made to the website and Policies Manual.

Once a year in May, the Board of Trustees conducts a self-evaluation in conjunction with a performance appraisal of the President. The chairman of the Board gathers the results and summarizes it into a report for the Board to discuss. The chair of the Board of Trustees shall initiate the confidential Board self-evaluation. The self-evaluation is conducted annually during the scheduled May meeting. The self-evaluation will be distributed to all trustees electronically. Completed evaluations will be submitted through the survey system and directed to the Board chair for review and analysis. Summary results and analysis shall be disseminated to the Board and discussed with the President of Grace. All self-evaluations are made part of permanent Board records

B. Academic Affairs

Formal curriculum assessment is conducted June-July, every four years by faculty, the Director of Masters Degree Program, the Director of Certificate Programs, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Assessment compliance processes involve faculty, academic support staff, administrators, and board members.

End of Course Surveys are conducted at the end of each module. There are 5 modules in a year. The results are then distributed to the Vice President of Academic Affairs as well as to the individual Faculty member. A portion of the results of the survey regarding Library usage is given to the Librarian for assessment.

In March, Faculty members conduct a Self Evaluation and submit it to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The Vice President gathers information from End of Course Surveys, Peer Reviews, and other sources and performs a Performance

Review on each current Faculty Member. The Faculty member and the Vice President then review the evaluations together.

Teaching Site Reviews-Student Satisfaction Surveys and End of Course Surveys

Intentional assessment components throughout the student learning process have been incorporated into courses and programs and measured throughout with Student Learning Outcomes.

All Distant Education Programs regardless of location or type are included in and coordinated with assessment of curricular and co-curricular evaluation plans. Specific processes and procedures of measuring curricular and co-curricular assessment activities are identified in Academic Affairs timelines and instruments.

C. Student Services

Student Services conducts several areas of assessment throughout the year including Student Satisfaction Surveys in April, Alumni Surveys in July, and Exit Surveys in August. There is an ongoing analysis of data gleaned from all measurement instruments during the annual strategic planning process.

In January, Student Services, along with all other departments, evaluates its publications, policies and procedures.

The Mentoring Program is reviewed annually June-July.

Appendix A: Institutional Effectiveness Timeline Curricular and Co-Curricular

Month		Department	Form
January	Evaluation of publications, policies, website, and departmental procedures	All Departments	IE AD 102
March	Employee Self Evaluations	All Employees	IE EM 100
March	Evaluation of Executive Administration	All Departments	IE EM 102
March	Employee Performance Review	Dept. Supervisors	IE EM 102
March	Faculty Self Evaluations	Academics	IE FC 100
March	Faculty Performance Review by AVP	Academics	IE FC 103
March	Facilities Evacuation Procedures Review	Facilities	IE HSP 101
March	Buildings and Grounds Self-Inspection	Facilities	IE HSP 100
March	Building Evacuation Procedures Evaluation	Facilities	IE HSP 102
March	End of Course Surveys Module 3	Academics	IE FC 101& IE FC 102
April	Student Satisfaction Survey	Student Services	IE SA 102
May	Performance Appraisal of President	Board of Trustees	IE AD 101
May	Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation	Board of Trustees	IE BOT 100
May	End of Course Surveys Module 4	Academics	IE FC 101& IE FC 102
June	Departmental Evaluation	All Departments	
June-July	Distance Education Review Annual	Academics	IE FC 101 IE FC103
June-August	Curriculum Planning and Program Review (4 Yr Cycle) 2011-BSC & TSC 2012-MABS 2013-MDiv 2014-ThM	Academics	IE FC 106 IE FC 108 IE FC 109 IE FC 110 IE FC 111
June-July	Advising Process/Mentoring Review	Student Services	
July	Alumni Survey	Student Services	IE SA 103
August	End of Course Surveys Module 5	Academics	IE FC 101& IE FC 102
August	Exit Survey	Student Affairs	IE SA 104
September	Foundational Statements Review (Odd Years)	All Departments	
October	Buildings and Grounds Self-Inspection	Facilities	IE HSP 100
October	Take Cover Procedure Evaluation	Facilities	IE HSP 102
October	Emergency Procedure Evaluation	Facilities	IE HSP 102
October	Departmental Evaluation	All Departments	IE AD 100& IE AD 103
October	End of Course Surveys Module 1	Academics	IE FC 101& IE FC 102

November	IE Self Evaluation	IE Department	IE OIE 102
November	IE Evaluation by Departments	All Departments	IE OIE 102
December	End of Course Surveys Module 2	Academics	IE FC 101& IE FC 102
December	Evaluation of Library Services	Library	IE LIB 100

Appendix B: Institutional Effectiveness Instruments by Department

Office of Institutional Effectiveness			
IE OIE 102	Departmental Evaluation of OIE	OIE Department Review by Departments	Evaluation of assessment cycle, policies and procedures
IE OIE 103	Assessment Summary Report Form	Evaluation of assessment instruments	Identifies assessment results, strengths, improvements, and budget and strategic implications
IE OIE 104	Departmental Analysis Summary Report Form	Assessment Summary by Department	Strategic Planning and functional action items

Administration			
IE AD 100	SWOT Analysis Template	Assessment of each department's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats	Basis for preparation of goals and establish or improve programs
IE AD 101	Annual Appraisal of the President's Performance and Effectiveness	Performance appraisal of the President by the Board of Trustees	Planning/Assessment instruments used to promote successful leadership practices at Grace
IE AD 102	Evaluation of Publications, Policies, and Procedures	Evaluation of publications, policies, and procedures by department	Evaluate validity and accuracy of publications, policies, and procedures in accord with mission
IE AD 103	Analysis Summary Chart	Completion and evaluation of the assessment cycle and the efficiency of institutional effectiveness process	Identifies Goals that need further assessment. Records recommendations and suggested improvements

Academic Affairs and Faculty			
IE FC 100	Faculty Self-Evaluation	Affords the faculty member to examine his teaching ability from his own perspective	The AVP compares the faculty member's viewpoint and that of his own to accurately determine functional level
IE FC 101	End of Course Survey Non-Residential	Student analysis of individual course section	Helps the professor and VPAA evaluate courses and review for appropriate changes
IE FC 102	End of Course Survey Residential	Student analysis of individual course section	Helps the professor and VPAA evaluate courses and review for appropriate changes
IE FC 103	Evaluation of Faculty	To encourage the faculty member and discover areas of needed improvement	Results encourage faculty members to improve their teaching capabilities for greater success in the classroom
IE FC 105	Peer Review	Faculty analysis of individual course section	Helps the professor and VPAA evaluate classroom instruction, communication, and organization
IE FC 106	Curriculum Review	Faculty analysis of all courses	Faculty and VPAA conduct data-driven analysis of current curriculum
IE FC 106a	Program Review	In depth Review of each program	Helps the Director and VPAA evaluate effectiveness of identified program components
IE FC 108	School-Wide Writing Standards	Measures writing quality-lower level.	Determines writing level of lower level students.
IE FC 109	Rubric-Wisdom Literature-Psalms Chart	Measures student learning in OT-516	Determines if student has met one or more Program Learning Outcome (PLO)

IE FC 110	Rubric Systematic Theology- Research Paper	Measures student learning in Theology courses	Determines if student has met one or more Program Learning Outcome (PLO)
IE FC 111	Sample Rubric for Grading Written Work	Measures writing competence and communication skills	Determines writing level of students
IE FC 112	Bible Entrance/Exit Exam	Measures student basic Bible & Theology knowledge	Determines % improvement from prior to entering to graduation

Student Services			
IE SA 102	Student Satisfaction Survey	In-depth survey to measure students satisfaction of student services and academic programs	Helps to determine strengths and weaknesses of the school's programs, services, and equipment
IE SA 103	Alumni Survey	Measures alumni perceptions of the Seminary's contribution to their development, job placement, and alumni preferences	Helps to determine strengths and weaknesses of the school's programs
IE SA 104	Exit Survey	Measures students' perceptions of the Seminary's contribution to their development, job placement, and reason for departure from academic studies	Helps to determine strengths and weaknesses of the school's academic programs and services

Library			
IE LIB 100	Evaluation of Library	Instrument to assess operational effectiveness of Library Services	Data analysis included in strategic planning recommendations to improve services to students and faculty

Employee			
IE EM 100	Employee Self Evaluation	An examination of the employee's level of functioning based upon job description and assignments	Data from evaluation offers professional growth opportunities
IE EM 102	Employee Evaluation	An examination of the employee's level of functioning based upon job description and assignments	Data from evaluation offers professional growth opportunities

Board of Trustees			
IE BOT 100	BOT Self-Evaluation	Measures the Board's performance	Helps the Board to evaluate and reassess its responsibilities and functions
IE BOT 101	BOT Qualifications & Responsibilities	Instrument record of the BOT self-evaluation, the President evaluation, and the review of the Foundational Statements.	Data source for BOT and chairman

Health, Security, Property			
IE HSP 100	Building and Grounds Self Inspection	Instrument data records facility operations, conditions, and level of criteria to fulfill occupancy requirements	Data analysis provides administration with accurate information in facilities improvement and space utilization
IE HSP 102	Take Cover Procedure Evaluation	Evaluation of procedures and personnel processes in emergency situations	Results ensure safety of faculty, staff, and students

Appendix C: Institutional Effectiveness Timeline

Budget Planning Process and Timeline		
Time Frame	Planning Tasks and Data Analysis	Actions and Responsibilities
June - November	Environmental scans, revisions of Strategic Planning Process, review of School goals, assessment plan and instruments distributed to staff and faculty, selection of benchmark institutions for comparisons, review of departmental goals, review of Mission Statement.	Assessment Plan implemented by all departments of the institution. SWOT analysis conducted by department. Executive summaries by department heads
November-December	Assessment results, summaries of SWOT analysis, Strategic Plan recommendations, new goals established, budget analysis by department.	Department heads (curricular and co-curricular) submit findings and recommendations for departmental goals and associated budget to the Strategic Planning Committee.
January	Strategic Plan revisions considered based upon departmental assessment analysis. Preliminary combined budget compiled based upon strategic goals.	Strategic Planning Committee, with the Chief Financial Officer, submits preliminary budget to department heads for review and comments by appropriate staff and faculty.
February	Review of departmental goals, short term and long term strategies. Review of preliminary budget developed by department linked to SWOT analyses and goals.	Budget hearings by department with Chief Financial Officer, Business staff, and representatives of the Strategic Planning Committee.
March	Strategic Planning Committee revises, publishes, and distributes the updated Five Year Plan to faculty and staff for review. Preliminary budget proposal considered by Executive Administrators	Vice-Presidents review Strategic Plan with revisions to be presented to Board of Trustees. Budget Proposal reviewed by President and Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer.
April	Proposed Budget discussion held with Financial Sub-Committee of the Board of Advisors and the Board of Trustees	President, Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer
May	Revisions of Budget based upon recommendations by Financial Sub-Committees of BOA and BOT	President, Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer, Chairman, Board of Trustees
May	Final Budget approval	Recommendations from Board of Advisors and final approval by Board of Trustees

Appendix D: Budget Planning Process and Timeline

Time Frame	Planning Tasks and Data Analysis	Actions and Responsibilities
June - November	Environmental scans, revisions of Strategic Planning Process, review of School goals, assessment plan and instruments distributed to staff and faculty, selection of benchmark institutions for comparisons, review of departmental goals, review of Mission Statement.	Assessment Plan implemented by all departments of the institution. SWOT analysis conducted by department. Executive summaries by department heads
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April	Proposed Budget discussion held with Financial Sub-Committee of the Board of Advisors and the Board of Trustees	President, Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer
May	Revisions of Budget based upon recommendations by Financial Sub-Committees of BOA and BOT	President, Executive Vice President/Chief Financial Officer, Chairman, Board of Trustees
May	Final Budget approval	Recommendations from Board of Advisors and final approval by Board of Trustees