

Strategic Planning at Higher Education Institutions: A Case Study of ABC University

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Abstract: Breaking Boundaries, Accelerating Transformation – The slogan connotes a fervent desire of the university leadership and the academic community to break free from the shackles of mediocrity. After over a hundred years of existence, the university has become a dynamic and productive institution of learning producing some of the country's top professionals and has made significant headways in academic programs, research, community engagement and international partnerships. The Vision of the University is to be a progressive knowledge generating institution globally recognized for excellent instruction, pioneering research, and responsive community engagements. The University exists to produce highly competent, ethical, and service-oriented professionals that contribute to the sustainable socio-economic growth and development of the nation. The transformation and development of an educational institution depends on the way the leader can guide the academic community to change for excellence. This can be measured by the quality of faculty, students, and graduates, the realization of the vision and mission of the institution and the impact of the university's products to society. Institutional development is a function of fund sourcing, image enhancing, capacity building, commitment and cooperation, organizational structure, and policy.

Key Words: — *Higher Education, University, Academic programs.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Strategic planning is one of the primary objects of an institution. It involves the identification, implementation, and monitoring of strategies of the institution which define the behaviour of the institution under changing and indefinite environmental conditions. In this concept executives should define institution's mission, vision, and basic values and set strategies which help institutions reach their goals in the light of these.

Strategic planning is the designing of an institution's future by analysing its present situation, the analysis of those targets

which it wants to attain in the future and how it will attain these targets and the effective and efficient use of its resources to this end. While strategic goals and targets can be followed with the understanding of strategic planning, both unity of target between the units is formed and their priorities for employees are determined.

Strategic planning is described as generating the future mission and vision of the institution in a dynamic environment and changing surroundings, determining strategic objectives and measurable targets, measuring the performances by predetermined indicators and monitoring, and evaluating this process. It is a participative approach which enables the budget of an institution to be in accordance with the aims and targets in the strategic plan from a forward-looking point of view and gives priority to resource allocation.

II. FRAMEWORK FOR INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Integrated in the five-point development agenda and cascaded as programs, projects, and activities, these determinants of institutional development are envisioned to synergize and transform the university into highly effective agency for human resource development and a significant catalyst for regional and national progress.

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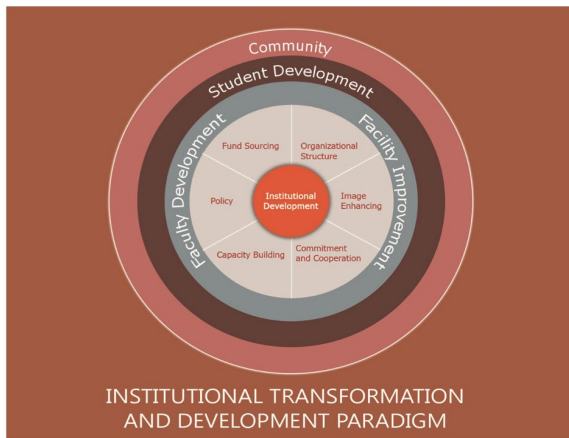


Figure 1. ABC Institutional Transformation and Development Framework

Fund Sourcing. As a state-funded institution, there is always limitation in the funding. The national government subsidizes the salary of regular faculty and employees and provides funding for the maintenance and other operating expenses. Realizing the discrepancy of available budget vs. the needed budget for development, the administrator taps the internal and external sources of funding. Several activities can be done like resource generation by the business affairs office and production services, fund outsourcing for research and extension, faculty scholarship, and donations for infrastructure.

Organizational Structure. A defined organization structure is important as it provides direction, sets the responsibilities of units, shares the accountabilities to every member of the organization, opens communication, long term, and short-term participatory planning and dissemination of vital information to stakeholders.

Image Enhancing. Positive image ensures support of the community where the university operates and conducts development programs. The university's administrators must work diligently to build, enhance, and protect the university's image.

Commitment and Cooperation. Academic institutions should function as a system and therefore members of the organization should share a common vision and mission, moving towards a synergized direction and are motivated to achieve a common goal. Involvement of the members of the organization in crafting the vision and mission, preparing the plan and implementation of programs of the university ensures their commitment and cooperation.

Capacity Building. "A dedicated, well-trained person will

always find a way to get a job done, whatever the institutional setting. On the other hand, a good organizational structure, however well-defined, may have no impact if the people working within the structure do not have the capacity to implement the program." (Prof. W.A. Segeren, 2003)

Policy. All the legal framework, implementation strategies and priorities in carrying out development programs must be carefully crafted and approved. The center of an academic institution is the students. The quality of the institution is measured by the quality of students it produced, the learning outcome of students.

III. THE FIVE STRATEGIC GOALS OF THE UNIVERSITY

Aside from the Vision and Mission of the University, specific goals are also crafted to firmly direct all the members of the institution towards the fulfillment of its purpose of providing quality education. Goals give us a roadmap to follow. It holds the members accountable to one another. The five strategic goals are as follows:

Goal 1: Provide Relevant Quality and Accessible Education

The University is committed in providing education that is accessible to deserving and qualified students through internationally recognized and industry-responsive programs set in a 21st century learning environment. The University is mandated to promote relevant and quality education by offering programs at par with international standards and is accessible to all who seek it, particularly to those who may not be able to afford it. One strategy is to put into place a robust and reliable quality assurance framework which will make material contributions to the quality and standards of our programs, products, and services.

The delivery of relevant programs is built on a network of advance partnerships for whom the university is the preferred higher education provider by increasing contribution from larger partnerships and clusters of international collaborations. The University capitalizes on its regional strength to build a national and international brand by enhancing its quality, reputation, and perception. This aim will be achieved through blended and franchised delivery models, development of programs that are fit for purpose, and professionalism of its faculty and staff.

Subgoal I: The Brand:

Establish identified programs as models of excellence and resource centers for other HEIs.

Subgoal II: Quality Assurance:

Institutionalize quality assurance systems of programs and operations that qualifies the university for at least level 4 status in the SUC leveling.

Subgoal III: Competitiveness:

Develop the University into a notable hub of programs that are internationally recognized and industry responsive.

Subgoal IV: Faculty / Staff Development and Sustainability:

Implement an extensive and sustainable faculty and staff development program that ensure quality instruction and services.

Subgoal V: 21st Century Learning Environment:

Provide learners of the 21st century with a technologically-inclined learning environment.

Subgoal VI: Accessibility:

Broaden access to quality higher education to deserving and marginalized students.

Goal 2: Innovative and Responsive Research and Public Engagement

The research and extension program of the University are a result of close collaboration with national agencies and frequent consultation with the industries, LGUs and citizenry of the province and the region. The research program is focused in responding to the immediate needs of the community. These studies are envisioned for use in academic instruction, extension projects and bases for policy making and blueprint for production. Researches are conducted in the interest of social justice and sustainable development to attain equity among a diverse population.

The extension program aims to fully utilize the research outputs for industry assistance community and social restructuring and efficient delivery of services to the vulnerable and substantial risk groups in a stratified society.

The Research Agenda for 2016-2020 which is anchored on the Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives of the University reflects the priorities and thrusts of the national government particularly those of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). It also reflects the immediate needs and concerns of Central Luzon and the Local

Government Units of the province. This agenda, when fulfilled to its optimum, will address the genuine problems confronting society in general and the University in particular.

Subgoal I: Establish Relevant Research Programs

Subgoal II: Institutionalize Innovation and Technology Support Office

Subgoal III: Efficient Research and Knowledge Management

Subgoal IV: Responsive Community Engagement

Subgoal V: Ensuring Environment Protection and Management

Goal 3: The University in Regional Development

The commitment of the university to expand its productive capacity is by playing a greater role in regional development. The university is the breeding ground of future experts and the chief agency in developing professionals. Toward this end, the following imperatives were deemed significant: actively informing regional development policies; strengthening public-private partnerships; strengthening research capability; exposing students to overseas education and capacitating external stakeholders.

Subgoal I: Influence Regional Development

On the macro-economic perspective, the university intends to fully participate in the affairs of the Regional Development Council. This is to ensure that it will significantly influence its policies and programs.

Subgoal II: Participate in Public-Private Partnerships

In the face of rapidly changing labor market landscapes, the University desires its graduates to find meaningful employment in regional, national, and international arena.

Subgoal III: Conduct of Industry and Market-Oriented Research Innovation and Development

The University targets the delivery of training programs on a regional scale to translate its community-oriented development goals to concrete reality.

Subgoal IV: Enable Students to Benefit from Overseas Educational Opportunities

The University intends to provide its students with world-class training experience. The mobile global worker must be grounded in global skills requirements including character and value formation.

Subgoal V: Dynamic Technical Support Program

The University intends to provide target communities with

capacity building training in the areas of job readiness and income generating ventures.

Goal 4: Sound Financial Management

Sufficient resources are necessary towards the attainment of its goals thus proper financial management is important. In the next five years the financial requirements of the University amount to Php 3.2 billion.

Subgoal I: Prudent Spending:

Keeping right prioritization. Observing laws and rules on government expenditures, the University will strictly comply with accounting, budgeting, and auditing rules and regulations such as R.A. 9184, P.D. 1445, R.A. 6713 etc. to avoid misuse of funds.

Subgoal II: Resource Generation

Improving the current revenue/income collection scheme. The University will implement regular monitoring and evaluation of the existing income-generating projects of the university to achieve 100% collection in five years.

Establishing new income-generating projects. The university will establish new income-generating projects to have additional sources of funds to sustain the financial requirements of different PAPs. A seed capital of Php 1.5 million will be earmarked for this undertaking.

Engaging in Public-Private Partnership. The university will enter a private partnership and other funding institutions to source out additional funds such as, NGOs, POs, Industries, Business Clubs, UNESCO, US AID, Japan AID, AusAID JICA, Foundations, etc.

Making long term investment. The University will invest the unused funds or accumulated savings into income-generating investments such as treasury bonds, mutual funds, and other long term negotiable financial instruments.

Goal 5: Good Governance

The University is at the doorway to a dynamic change as it seeks its rightful place in the evolving Philippine higher education having global education, innovation, national and international economy as its backdrop. The development of highly competent, ethical, and service-oriented graduates contributing to national development shall serve as the hallmark of excellent academic programs of the University.

Subgoal I: Equity to All Officials and Personnel

Anchored on collaborative and participatory procedures of governance, conduct of quarterly meetings of stakeholders, and shall form part of administrative procedures of the university.

Subgoal II: Transparency and Accountability

Leadership in all offices will be measured not only in its capacity to perform its assigned tasks but also in its exercise of accountability and transparency.

Subgoal III: Advocated Participative Governance

All-important decisions in every aspect of the University's operations with perceived impact to the academic community and external stakeholders shall undergo a process of collaboration. No voice will be unheard wherein all stakeholders including students, faculty members, officials, and community, will take part in hammering essential decisions in all aspects of its operation and activities.

Table.1. Example of strategies and performance indicators included in Strategic Plan 2016-2020

GOAL 1: Provide Relevant Quality and Accessible Education		
Sub Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicator
The Brand	1. Increase enrolment in Charter-mandated and CHED-identified priority programs.	Increase number of enrollees.
	2. Decrease enrolment in over-subscribed disciplines.	Decrease in number of enrollees.
	3. Close non-viable and sub-standard programs.	Identify and evaluate non-viable and sub-standard programs.
	4. Use the 2-year senior high school implementation to design and implement a master plan for flagship programs of the university.	Complete master plan by 2018. At least five (5) flagship programs in place by 2021. (Reevaluation and rationalization of other programs per campus).
	5. Compliance to COE/COD requirements.	At least 10 programs granted by CHED with COE/COD status by 2020.
Quality Assurance	1. Ensure compliance of various curricular programs to CHED standard.	All programs are CHED compliant by 2018.
	2. Sustain and promote attainment of standards above CHED minimum requirements by subjecting programs to AACUP assessment.	All programs are, at least, AACUP level 2 accredited by 2018. At least 8 programs are at level 4 re-accredited status by 2021.
	3. Institutionalize Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms of outcomes of the programs, processes, and services of the university's KRAs.	Certification granted by the following: ISO 9001:2015, ISA, PQA, and AACUP Institutional Accreditation.
Competitiveness	1. Improve university passing rate in all programs with licensure examinations.	Increase in university passing percentage in all programs with licensure examinations by 10% annually from the baseline.
	2. Increase in employability rate of the graduates.	Increase in employment rates of graduates by 5% annually for all programs.

GOAL 1: Provide Relevant Quality and Accessible Education		
Sub Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicator
Faculty/Staff Development & Sustainability	1. Participate in international and regional networks and negotiating/facilitating agreements on academic cooperation and linkages with local industry, other countries as well as with international organization for program enhancement.	Increased number of Faculty Members with industry immersion by 25% annually.
	2. Increase the number of vertically aligned/articulated faculty members.	Increase number of Faculty members that are vertically aligned.
	3. Upgrade the academic qualifications of faculty to masters and doctorate degree levels.	Increase number of master's and doctorate degree holders.
	4. Increase the number of vertically aligned/articulated faculty members.	Increase number of Faculty members that are vertically aligned.
	5. Re-tool concerned faculty by way of the Continuing Professional Education Program.	Faculty members attend/participate in trainings as participants/presenters in line with their area of specialization annually.
21 st Century Learning Environment	1. Develop and implement university-based sustainability projects for green school initiatives.	Awarded a dark green campus.
	2. Conduct capacity analysis of the requirement for student-classroom ratio.	Adequate number of class room for 40 students per class.
	3. Increase the technological capacity vis-à-vis to the total number of students technological needs.	1:1 computer ratio per class.
	4. Increase band width.	Increased internet band width from 14 Mbps to 100 Mbps by 2016 (Internet ready campus).
	5. Provide framework for the physical environment that incorporate the influence of required academic program	Increased number of facilities (complying with standards by 15% annually starting 2018).
	6. Contract Centralized functional e-library.	Contract Centralized functional e-lib established.
	7. Construct study area for students.	Increase number of study areas established for students.
	8. Continue to create and convert non-functional rooms and peripherals for faculty use.	Increase number of faculty lounge.
	9. Develop and implement university-based sustainability projects for green school initiatives.	Awarded a dark green campus.
	10. Adopt a university comprehensive strategy that is dedicated to improving the critical path toward constructing building with innovative equipment, design engineering expertise, and project and site management, within an environment of excellence.	Number of buildings constructed adoptive to Green Building requirement.
	11. Review, analyze and implement facility maintenance investment in the account of increasing enrollment for fractionality.	Increase number of upgraded facilities and instructional equipment and laboratory.
Accessibility	1. Harmonized and integrate scholarship schemes for clientele aimed at	Increase number of scholars. Gender-balanced scholarship program.

GOAL 1: Provide Relevant Quality and Accessible Education		
Sub Goals	Strategies	Performance Indicator
	channeling resources so that access to higher education made available.	Increased number of scholarships provided to poor but qualified students.
	2. Seek and invite philanthropist that will donate and designate endowments.	Increased number of benefactors.
		Increased amount of scholarship fund.
	3. Determine and establish effective method in engaging each course to achieve highest learning outcomes.	Increased number of programs developed for distance education/blended mode of delivery.
Increased number of courses developed using (Massive Open Online Course) MOOC.		
4. Comply with the set of standards enumerated by CHED.	CHED approval of Transnational Education Program.	

IV. ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

The best formulated and implemented strategies become obsolete as a firm's external and internal environments change. It is therefore essential for an organization to systematically review, evaluate, and control the execution of strategies. In this paper, the researchers analyzed and evaluated the results of the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan of the University. The following are the findings:

- There are targets that are not met because of uncontrollable situation, one of which is having at

least 10 programs granted by CHED with COE/COD status by 2020. This has not been materialized because in 2018, the Commission on Higher Education issued a moratorium on the application for Center of Excellence (COE) and Center of Development (COD).

- The offices that will implement and monitor a certain strategy are not specified.
- There is no action plan on how to execute a strategy, for instance, the increase in university passing percentage in all programs with licensure examination by 10% annually from the baseline. Specific plan was not developed and implemented in those programs that has licensure examination.
- Recalibration activity was done by the University; however, it does not focus on how to achieve the set targets.
- There are targets that are inter-related, example the number of commercialized technologies is dependent to number of incubated technologies. Since the technologies are still on the process of incubation, the target of 2 commercialized technologies were not achieve.
- There are set targets that are impossible to achieve because there are restrictions from the government, example is the percentage of unused funds in long-term investment. As a government institution, the university is not allowed to implement the said target.
- The following is the percentage achievement of the set goals. Goal 1: 80%, Goal 2: 70.97%, Goal 3: 58.33%, Goal 4: 62.50% and Goal 5: 100% In general, 73.63% of the set targets were achieved.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Recommendation

- To ensure the achievement of the set targets, there should be a clear and concise plan on how to execute strategies.
- Carefully identify who will implement and monitor the specific strategies to ensure its attainment.
- Evaluate further the set strategies to avoid conflict to the existing rules and regulations set by the

government.

- The recalibration activity must focus on how to achieve the set targets. Sub-activities may be included such as reporting on the status of the set targets, evaluation of implemented strategies and formulation of new strategies if necessary to achieve the set targets.
- Make sure to achieve all the set targets to avoid having targets that cannot be achieved specially if is related to each other.

5.2 Conclusion

In general, the researchers concluded that strategic planning is especially important to any organization or institution. Strategic planning plays a vital role in achieving the vision and mission of the university. It focuses on the formulation, implementation and evaluation of cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives. On the other hand, strategic plan is the game plan of an organization. The University must have a good strategic plan to successfully complete its vision, mission, and goals.

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