I. Policy Statement and Purpose

In accordance with the requirements of the Board of Trustee’s Strategic Direction Policy, this operating policy establishes the standards for the development of strategic goals and a strategic plan for the University. These standards are based on comparable practices at other institutions of higher education, and endeavor to ensure that the University is in compliance with applicable state and federal regulations and with the requirements of appropriate accrediting agencies.

University Policies are set by the Board of Trustees and express the comprehensive or overriding expectations and/or requirements of the Board related to achieving the mission of the University or to the duties of the President. As such, the Strategic Direction Policy requires that the Board of Trustees approve strategic goals and a strategic plan that will cover a period of not less than three years from the date on which the plan is approved, and that the Board review and reaffirm the plan on an annual basis. The strategic planning process must provide direction, objectives, goals, benchmarks, and actions that ensure advancement of the University both internally and externally.

II. The Strategic Planning Committee

The President will seek broad-based input in the development and implementation of the strategic goals and plan by appointing a Strategic Planning Committee composed of administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The ex-officio voting membership of the Committee will consist of:

- The President (chair)
- The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (vice-chair)
- The Vice President for Enrollment and Student Support Services
- The Vice President for Financial Affairs
- The Vice President for University Advancement
- Chief Information Officer/Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
- The Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate
- The Presiding Officer of the Staff Senate
- The Director of Institutional Research and Assessment
- The University SACS Accreditation Liaison
- Special Assistant to the President for Board Relations and Policy Analyst
- The President of the Student Government Association (or other SGA officer as appointed by the SGA and approved by the University President)

Voting members appointed by the President will consist of:

- Three faculty members (one from each academic College)
- Three staff members (each representing a different area of the University)
- One member of the Alumni Board of Directors
The President will also appoint an additional staff member to serve as a non-voting recorder for the Committee. Appointed members of the committee will serve three-year staggered terms. In the first year of operation under this policy, the President will determine the members who will serve for one, two, or three years from the initial appointment, so as to establish the foundation for staggered terms. The President will appoint replacements for any positions which become vacant prior to the expiration of a term.

III. Responsibilities of the Committee

Review of the Vision, Mission, and Goals Statements

The Strategic Planning Committee will review the vision, mission, and goals statements every 3 years or more often as required. For example, a review of the statements may be triggered at any time by any substantive or other institutional changes that impact the institution as a whole, and/or by changes in the requirements of regulatory or accreditation entities.

Any proposed revisions to the statements will be based on analysis of relevant information, and the review will include broad-based consultations, with the opportunity for commentary from members of the University community. Following the period for review, any revisions to the statements developed by the Committee must be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

The Strategic Planning Process

In accordance with the Board’s Strategic Direction Policy, the Committee’s planning process will include:

- Development of all planning documents (3-year strategic plan, implementation plan, etc.).
- Development of a structured annual cycle for implementation and assessment.
- Development of components at both the institutional and department/area level, with defined metrics and outcomes for the objectives and goals defined in the plans.

The University’s vision, mission, and goals statements ultimately serve as the foundation for strategic planning. The Committee will develop a 3-year strategic plan based on these statements and on appropriate pre-plan surveys, analyses, and scans. Broad-based input should be sought in developing the plan and the associated goals and action items. The Committee will also develop an implementation plan, with defined goals and objectives for each year of the 3-year plan. To ensure implementation, areas or departments responsible for developing strategies for achieving the goals and objectives should be clearly identified. Annual goals and objectives must be tied to annual assessment efforts in order that annual progress is consistently monitored.

Once a 3-year strategic plan is developed by the Committee and approved by the Board, the Committee will continue to meet on a regular basis to review annual implementation plans and the results of annual assessment efforts. As part of this review, the Committee will be responsible for an annual progress report to the President and the Board of Trustees, including any recommendations for updates in the 3-year plan or changes in the implementation of the plan.
The full Strategic Planning Committee will typically meet twice annually. An Executive Committee, consisting of the Provost, Vice President for Financial Affairs, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, and two other members elected by the full Committee, will meet more frequently in order to fulfill the Committee’s responsibilities.

Committee members are expected to actively participate in committee activities and discussions. The Committee is also expected to disseminate meeting minutes and information about strategic plans, implementation plans, and progress to the University community on a regular basis.

IV. **Responsibility for this Operating Policy**

**Policy Owner**

As part of the initial approval of this policy by the President and subsequent to the original dissemination of the policy, the President remains the policy owner for the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews and revisions to this policy must be in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently as needed.

**Responsibility for Policy Implementation**

The President has assigned the responsibility of implementing this policy to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.