This is a second and complete draft outline of the university’s strategic plan. It remains a working document and is being made available to the university community by Provost Kent Fuchs for another round of comments and suggestions. This outline was prepared and revised by the Strategic Planning Advisory Council, chaired by Professor Ed Lawler. (See http://www.cornell.edu/reimagining/plan.cfm.) We appreciate the feedback and suggestions received in January and February and again invite your input. Please send your comments and suggestions to strategicplanning2010@cornell.edu by April 1, 2010. The next step is to draft the text based on this outline. The full text version will be available in May 2010. Thank you again for your assistance and cooperation.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Approach

This strategic plan treats Cornell University as a single unit or entity. Cornell, aptly described as the “first American university,” is today a comprehensive university that combines the finest attributes of an Ivy League institution with an unusually deep commitment to public service, stemming from its history as a land grant institution. The academic strengths of the university are grounded in a wide range of outstanding colleges and schools, each of which has achieved academic excellence and a position of distinction in its own field. Cornell is a productive conglomeration of very strong colleges and schools, and it also is a whole greater than the sum of these parts. The focus of this strategic plan is that “greater sum,” rather than the particular subunits or parts that compose it. The plan proposes university-wide goals and actions that crosscut or transcend the boundaries of colleges, schools, and administrative units. It suggests that the university can take even greater advantage of its distributed strengths while also reinforcing those strengths and facilitating the “bottom-up” blossoming of innovation and creativity characteristic of the colleges and schools.

Developing a strategic plan with a focus on Cornell as a single entity is timely. The challenges and opportunities of Cornell’s changing environment suggest the need for enhanced institutional capacity to act as a unit, that is, to chart strategic directions and mobilize colleges and schools around those directions. A few examples: The renewal of Cornell’s faculty is a major issue for the university in light of anticipated retirements over the next ten to fifteen years, and this requires an institution-wide response. This challenge also presents an opportunity to increase significantly the diversity of the faculty. The growing infrastructure costs of research and scholarship (e.g., libraries, research facilities) require an institutional response that sets priorities and ensures support is cost-effective. Financial pressures from the cumulative declines in state support for the land grant mission create a need to rethink how the university fulfills its outreach mission and whether historic structures and practices will be adequate in the future. Institutional, university-wide strategies and tactics will help Cornell meet such challenges effectively over the next five years and take advantage of associated opportunities for academic enhancements.

An Aspiration

The plan puts forth an overarching aspiration for the university: to be widely recognized as a top-ten research university in the nation and world, and a model university for the interweaving of liberal education and fundamental knowledge with practical education and impact on societal and world problems. This aspiration reflects both Cornell’s stature as a first-tier, Ivy League institution of higher education and its special and unique capacity to bridge the world of thought and ideas and the world of practice and action. This is an ambitious aspiration, but it is
achievable within ten years with dedicated effort and the support of alumni and friends of Cornell University.

The general strategy for enhancing academic excellence proposed here is captured by two words: focus and connectivity. (1) Focus on strong or potentially strong academic programs that are strategically important to the university and maintain areas of excellence within each of the basic academic groupings—humanities and the arts; life sciences and agricultural sciences; physical sciences and engineering; social sciences; and professional schools. In other words, create and maintain academic leadership across all of the broad areas but do so selectively and strategically within each. (2) Build greater “connectivity” among the diverse colleges, schools, and programs around these basic academic areas by developing new integrations, boundary-crossing structures, and productive synergies. Greater connectivity implies that it will be easy for students and faculty to cross college and program boundaries in pursuit of their academic goals. The idea is to make academic boundaries at Cornell as porous and seamless as possible.

Specific Objectives and Actions

This plan develops a series of specific objectives (ends) and actions (means) to enhance excellence in five central domains of the university: Faculty; Education; Research, Scholarship, and Creativity; Outreach and Public Engagement; Staff and Organizational Stewardship. The Faculty section emphasizes the importance of robust, continued faculty recruitment, enhancing the diversity of faculty, and anticipating future retirements through pre-filling positions and recruiting at lower ranks. The Education section emphasizes ways to enhance excellence in teaching across the university and enable students to take full advantage of the university’s educational breadth through more field-based or international activities in which they “engage the world” in their academic work. A key theme is to make public engagement a more distinctive component of education at Cornell. The Research, Scholarship, and Creativity section stresses the need to increase the number of academic departments that achieve a position of leadership, strengthen support for emerging interdisciplinary areas, and provide libraries and shared research facilities that are competitive. In a section on Public Engagement, the outreach mission is broadly defined as “public engagement” in order to explicitly include the entire university. The plan suggests the need for a rigorous assessment of outreach activities with an eye toward connecting them even more closely to educational and research strengths on campus. A section on Staff Excellence affirms the critical role of staff in support of the academic mission of the university and the importance of being an exemplary employer; under “organizational stewardship,” the plan develops objectives and actions for how the management of key resources (finance, capital, and information technology) can efficiently support the academic mission. Effective organizational stewardship will be necessary to free up the resources important for achieving the strategic initiatives of this plan. Overall, the specific objectives and actions suggest the need for the university to move on a number of fronts to keep abreast of the competition and enhance academic excellence, while recognizing that all of these measures cannot be enacted at the same time.
Strategic Priorities and Initiatives

The highest overall priority proposed for the next five years is to enhance faculty excellence. This implies priority also be given to promoting and recognizing excellence and leadership in research, scholarship, and creativity. These priorities must be pursued with a corresponding focus on enhancing teaching; this is a key component of faculty excellence. A faculty excellence priority is appropriate and important at this time because of the need to anticipate and be proactive about forthcoming faculty retirements. Leadership in research, scholarship, and creativity is critical to the university’s aspirations as a research university, and a focus on teaching affirms a Cornell commitment to have faculty who achieve excellence in both research and teaching.

In the context of these overarching priorities, the plan proposes seven strategic initiatives over the next five years.

1. **Faculty renewal in the context of academic priorities and substantial retirements.** Identify strategically important departments where the age distribution will result in a significant loss of quality over the next ten years and develop multi-year hiring plans giving priority to recruiting new Ph.D.s and “rising stars.” Use pre-fills of retirements, internal reallocation, and fund-raising to generate necessary resources.

2. **Identify a few departments or fields of critical importance to the university and move them into a position of world leadership while working to prevent others from losing such stature.** Identify departments on the “cusp” of leadership or on the verge of losing it and make proactive efforts to generate or preserve that leadership.

3. **Promote a culture in support of teaching in every department across campus.** Improve assessments of teaching and enhance the importance of teaching excellence in the allocation of resources to departments, programs, and faculty. Identify good models for promoting a culture in support of teaching and use these as benchmarks to assess and improve teaching in other units.

4. **Develop stronger connections or ties across colleges that enhance educational opportunities for students and the quality and stature of disciplines or fields.** Develop policies that encourage students in one college or campus to take courses in another, and devise new mechanisms of coordination and connectivity across academic disciplines or across colleges within a given academic discipline.

5. **Implement strategically focused, cost-effective enhancements to the infrastructure in support of research, scholarship, and creativity.** This includes in particular the university libraries, shared research facilities in the sciences and social sciences, and administrative support for faculty applying for or managing research grants.

6. **Make significant progress toward a more diverse faculty, student body, and staff in terms of gender and race and ethnicity.** Establish explicit and ambitious targets, considering appropriate pipelines and the importance of “critical mass”; enhance
recruitment and retention processes; and ensure that mechanisms holding units accountable are effective.

7. **Strongly connect outreach and public engagement with Cornell’s areas of strength in research, scholarship, and education.** Broadly redefine the outreach mission as public engagement, extend it across campus, and develop approaches appropriate to different academic disciplines or fields; strengthen the opportunities for students to “engage the world” as part of their academic work.

**Assessments**

The plan develops a framework for assessing progress that emphasizes the importance of (a) multiple measures for a given objective or priority, (b) combining quantitative metrics and qualitative indicators, and (c) minimizing the staff time devoted to such measurements. This plan specifies a core set of metrics for assessing institutional progress toward key priorities. For example, these include the number of top-ranked programs and departments; amount and nature of faculty hiring; faculty and staff compensation; the age distribution of faculty; diversity of the faculty, students, and staff; student learning outcomes; student surveys; library rankings; and sponsored research. Such metrics need to be supplemented with qualitative assessments by colleges and regular external reviews of academic programs. Mechanisms of assessment will be developed further at the implementation stage of this strategic plan and in consultation with academic units.
Section I

PREAMBLE

Cornell University is a unique institution that from its inception has charted distinct pathways to academic excellence. It has been aptly described as the “first American university,”\(^1\) broad in scope, open and accessible to all. At the institution’s founding in 1865, Ezra Cornell said: “I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study.” Cornell from the beginning developed a curriculum that transcended the traditional restrictions of learning to classical education, just as it transcended social divides of the time. It was truly a university for anyone who was qualified and open to study in vocational and classical, practical and scientific areas. There was no other institution of higher education quite like it.

The legacy of this history today is a comprehensive research university that interweaves the main elements of an Ivy League university with an unusually strong public service mission. Many words have been used to describe the nature of this institution as a whole: complex, scattered, creative, entrepreneurial, eminent, and engaged. It has become and remains one of the most distinguished institutions of higher education in the nation and world. Its complexity, diversity, and comprehensiveness are a fountainhead of creativity and innovation.

This strategic plan takes as an object of focus, Cornell University as a single entity or unit. In part because of its complexity and comprehensiveness, Cornell University today is often characterized as a collection of excellent colleges and academic programs. This is certainly true, but Cornell is also a whole, greater than the sum of its parts. This plan addresses that “greater sum,” meaning the university as a whole. It does not analyze or deal with individual colleges but emphasizes broader cross-college and cross-unit issues.

Background

A. This strategic planning process was initiated by the president and provost of Cornell University in the summer of 2009. The planning effort occurs in the context of a changing environment for higher education in general and Cornell in particular. There is a need at this time for an overarching positive vision and aspiration looking to Cornell’s future, one that will guide the institution as it approaches and reaches its 150th anniversary. The immediate impetus for strategic planning in 2009–2010 also includes the following:

1. The worldwide financial downturn in summer and fall of 2008.

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2. The need for short-term actions to reduce budget deficits produced by this financial downturn, by debt financing for construction projects, and by excessive commitments in the operational budget.

3. A university administration committed to strategic planning in principle but also as essential in a time of declining or constrained resources.

4. The importance of placing academic decisions and priorities over the next few years in the context of a longer-term plan and vision for Cornell University.

B. This is not the first time that strategic planning has been done at the university.

1. A 1994 plan—a comprehensive plan that was completed shortly before a presidential transition.

2. The “Call to Engagement” of President Lehman which began an effort to reimagine the university at its sesquicentennial.

3. A 2008 plan—developed at the university center. It was conceived as a first step, but follow-up was aborted because a changing environment made significant parts of it outdated.

These previous planning efforts provide useful background for the current one, as do a series of Task Force Reports commissioned by the provost in spring and summer of 2009, and also planning within colleges.

Strategic Planning in 2009–2010

A. The current strategic planning effort has several distinctive characteristics.

1. As indicated above, it is focused on the university as a whole rather than its particular parts or units (e.g., colleges, major administrative units).

2. It proposes university-wide objectives (ends) and actions (tactics), recognizing that the implementation of many of these must necessarily be accomplished within and by colleges or other university units.

3. The plan aims to capture the university as a whole without claiming to be exhaustive.

4. This plan includes metrics or indicators (quantitative and qualitative) for assessing progress toward university-wide objectives.

5. The plan is a living document, and it will require continual adjustment and improvement.

B. The structure and process for creating this strategic plan also had a number of noteworthy elements:
1. It is faculty-driven/faculty-based—all ideas go through a small faculty group, the Strategic Planning Advisory Council (SPAC).

2. There are four Working Groups focused on particular topics: Education; Research, Scholarship, and Creativity; Public Engagement; and Organizational Stewardship. These provided ideas and input to the SPAC on particular goal areas.

3. Timeline for completion is short but feasible because of extensive recent analyses and planning in response to the financial downturn of 2008 and also because of the exclusive focus on broad university-wide issues.

4. The plan outline was developed through a sequence of major steps as follows:

   a. The SPAC developed a set of questions and issues which Working Groups (WGs) analyzed in more depth.
   b. The WGs provided informal reports to the SPAC from which the SPAC developed draft objectives and actions for several goal areas.
   c. The SPAC sent these back for comment and suggestions to WGs, the president, provost, deans, vice presidents, and vice provosts.
   d. A draft plan outline then was made available to the university community for comment on January 25, 2010. February and early March were devoted to gathering feedback across campus through meetings in every college, with student groups, and with staff.
   e. During this time, the SPAC set priorities among the objectives in each section, settled on seven strategic initiatives for 2010–2015, and developed metrics for assessing progress.
   f. The current outline is a revision and expansion of the earlier one and is being distributed for further feedback.

**Getting Started**

The Strategic Planning Advisory Council began meeting in early October 2009. They defined a key challenge at the outset and decided to conceive of and focus on Cornell as a whole, that is, as a single entity.

The challenge is: How can Cornell University preserve and enhance academic quality over the next five years in the context of limited or constrained resources? This is the overarching problem that this plan sets out to address, focusing on the 2010–2015 period of time.

The rationale for the focus on the university as a single entity is as follows:

1. Cornell’s academic strengths stem from and are based in colleges.
2. Yet Cornell is greater than the sum of its parts. Cornell’s reputation and status overall are not solely a function of the strengths of the various colleges but depend on how well these colleges take advantage of cross-college synergies to the benefit of the university.

3. A plan directed at Cornell as a single entity is important and timely.

4. Why? (a) The changing environment for higher education in general and Cornell in particular suggests the need for a greater institutional capacity to act as a unit—for example, to become more adaptable, more efficient, and more collaborative or have more “connective” tissue among the distinct parts. (b) Such a plan should enable the university to take better advantage of its distributed strengths at the college level but also reinforce and enhance those strengths.
Section II

CORNELL’S ENDURING COMMITMENTS

A. Introduction

- Academic Excellence
- Freedom and Responsibility
- Diversity

These are high priorities in everything the university does.

B. From Past to Present

1. Ezra Cornell’s vision:

   • “any person...any study”
   • access for people of all backgrounds
   • interweaving of liberal and practical education

   [Include a couple of quotes from Ezra Cornell]

   The unique combination of being an Ivy League research university and the land grant institution of New York State.

   Importance and centrality of public service, having an impact on the world; becoming international in scope.

2. Contemporary meaning of Ezra Cornell’s vision:

   a. A statement, quotes, or paraphrases from four former presidents (Corson, Rhodes, Rawlings, and Lehman) to show how this original vision has been expressed across different university administrations).

      Emphasize “any person;” interweaving of liberal and practical education.

   b. Introduce the university’s “Four Pillars” from President Skorton’s “State of the University Address” (October 23, 2009).

      • Classical and contemporary inquiry, “…shaped by the founder’s commitment to liberal and practical education.”
• “Thinking otherwise” by creative faculty, as expressed by Carl Becker (cite essay on “The Cornell Tradition: Freedom and Responsibility”).

• Student Access, which expresses a central dimension of Ezra Cornell’s original vision and Cornell’s historic aspiration of being both a distinguished academic institution and one that is open and accessible to all who merit entrance.

• Public Engagement expresses a deep commitment to the search for knowledge-based solutions to societal and world problems, and reflects a broad interpretation of the university’s land grant mission.

c. What is the meaning of “any person...any study” today? How should it be adapted for the 21st century?

C. Institutional Mission and Vision

1. Mission
Cornell is a private, Ivy League university and the land grant university for New York State. Cornell’s mission is to discover, preserve, and disseminate knowledge; produce creative work; and promote a culture of broad inquiry throughout and beyond the Cornell community. Cornell also aims, through public service, to enhance the lives and livelihoods of our students, the people of New York, and others around the world. [from Strategic Plan 2008]

2. Vision
Cornell aspires to be the exemplary comprehensive research university for the 21st century on the basis of our distinctive status as a private university with a formal public mission. Faculty, staff, and students will thrive at Cornell because of its unparalleled combination of quality and breadth; its high standards; its open, collaborative, and innovative culture; the opportunities provided by beautiful, vibrant rural and urban campuses; and programs that extend throughout the state of New York and across the globe. [from Strategic Plan 2008]2

D. Core Values

These are inviolable commitments that express “who are we as an institution” and what principles or qualities should infuse all practices and activities within the institution.

• Pursuit of knowledge
• Support free and open intellectual inquiry and expression

2 This vision statement will be modified by the end of the planning process.
• Sustain excellence in teaching, research, and public engagement
• Use knowledge to enlighten ourselves and impact the world
• Reward and recognize merit, creativity, and innovation
• Treat all individuals with dignity, respect, and fairness
• Embrace difference and diversity
• Promote cross-cultural and cross-national understanding
• Be a collaborative, collegial, and caring community
• Be accessible and affordable to all who meet high academic standards

E. Overarching University Goals

Below are enduring, timeless goals, necessary in some form for any major research university. Cornell has the capability to intertwine these in particularly creative ways, because of its combination of strength in fundamental disciplines or fields with a commitment to having a strong, positive impact on the world. These five goals define the broad areas within which this plan develops more specific objectives (ends) and actions (means) to achieve them.

1. Enroll, educate, and graduate the most deserving, promising, and diverse student body possible. Provide all students (undergraduate, graduate, professional) with an education that is innovative, distinctive, and of the highest quality, and that inspires in them a zest for learning.

2. Maintain and enhance world leadership in research, scholarship, and creativity.

3. Maintain and enhance efforts to recruit, nurture, and retain a diverse faculty who are outstanding scholars and teachers and an excellent, diverse staff who provide outstanding support to faculty and students.

4. Strengthen the public engagement of the university’s education, research, and clinical programs with local, national, and international communities, consonant with its stature as an academically distinguished private university with a public mission.

5. Establish and maintain organizational structures and processes that promote and support academic excellence.
F. University Aspiration

Cornell University will be widely recognized as a top-ten research university in the nation and world and a model university for the interweaving of liberal education and fundamental knowledge with practical education and impact on societal and world problems.

The first phrase of the aspiration, being among the top-ten research universities, is an important and worthy longer-term goal. A ten-year timeline is feasible with dedicated work and with the support of alumni and friends. The second phrase in the aspiration communicates the importance of pursuing the top-ten aspiration in part by taking further advantage of Cornell’s special qualities.3

The aspiration articulates the centrality of research, scholarship, and creativity (Goal 2 above) to a research university, yet implies the importance of the interconnections between the creation of fundamental knowledge and using that knowledge to have a positive impact on the world. In no way does this aspiration diminish the centrality of teaching and education at Cornell. The Strategic Planning Advisory Council accepts no trade-offs between the research and application emphasis of this aspiration and undergraduate, graduate, and professional education.

The aspiration requires that the university define a set of criteria or dimensions—objective and reputational—upon which it will judge where it currently stands and how much progress it makes over time. It also will need to make ongoing assessments of what the strategically important or critical academic units are; where the current academic strengths or emerging, potential strengths are; and how the diverse, college-based strengths can be efficiently and effectively built upon to achieve this aspiration in the next ten years.

Overall, the Strategic Planning Advisory Council believes that this aspiration should be pursued through more focus and connectivity within and across basic academic areas: humanities and the arts; life sciences and agricultural sciences; social sciences; physical sciences and engineering; and Cornell’s professional schools and colleges. Cornell has consistently had humanities and science disciplines ranked in the top ten or even higher among peers in addition to contract and specialized colleges of very high or unequaled stature in their respective fields. Life sciences is a critical area of emerging and growing strength, and the social sciences have a realistic prospect of growing significantly in strength and stature over the next ten years.

A diverse mix of academic areas, and distinctive professional schools and programs, are essential sources of Cornell’s special character and unique position among research universities. This combination needs to be carefully nurtured and retained. However, it does

3 Note that this is an aspiration for the university as a whole, not for its component parts. The appropriate aspiration for particular colleges or programs should be higher if at all possible. Some Cornell colleges and departments are number one in their fields and some are in the top five or so among peers. Each college or department should have aspirations that are a stretch.
not imply that the university has to be strong in every discipline or field within these broad academic areas, or necessarily even have all of the subfields within these areas as currently represented on campus. The proposed strategy of focus and connectivity suggests that, in pursuing the above aspiration, the university should create and maintain academic leadership across all of the broad areas but do so selectively and strategically within each and be prepared to consolidate or even, under some conditions, eliminate departments or programs that are no longer critical, as constituted, to the university and its colleges.

The next section addresses the environmental context, challenges, and opportunities to address over the next five years or so.
Section III

THE INSTITUTION AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

I. External Environment

A. A Changing World

Examples:

1. Globalization (e.g., economic and political interdependencies; social contacts with more diverse others)
2. Health and well-being
3. Changing nature of work
4. Environment sustainability (e.g., energy, climate change, food resources)

Cornell has something special and important to contribute to the understanding of and solution to world problems, given its historic and current strengths—including the breadth and distinctiveness of its academic programs and its capacity to interweave the creation of fundamental knowledge with practical applications.

B. Enduring Importance of Higher Education in This Changing World

1. Include some data here such as:
   - Percent high school students who go to college
   - Applications (to top-tier institutions)
   - Higher education as a source of source of upward mobility (e.g., a pathway out of poverty)

2. Need for an Educated and Informed Populace
   - Dealing with massive sets of complex and contradictory information.
   - Role of citizenship in a democracy

3. Higher Education and the Solution to Societal Problems
   - Knowledge for use to address world’s most pressing problems (e.g., famine, disease, political conflicts, energy, environmental sustainability)

4. Needs and Careers of Students Today
   - Institutions of higher education should prepare students for the complex and changing demands of future careers in today’s challenging global environment. As a result, learning goals should embrace a range of abilities and qualities that include and extend the outcomes of academic studies. For example, students at Cornell should learn:
– to appreciate the values and beliefs of multiple cultures
– to understand and embrace moral and ethical values
– to participate in community and civic affairs and engage with social problems
– to use knowledge in their own lives and pursue lifelong learning.
– to develop leadership and teamwork skills
– to care for themselves and manage physical and emotional needs responsibly

5. Competencies for Cornell Undergraduates

The Core Assessment Committee formed in fall 2009 has identified a set of educational goals that incorporate both academic and personal development. These goals are derived from the learning outcomes defined by each college, as well as from university mission statements and from a wide set of campus-wide activities and services that support students’ academic experience. The competencies identified are as follows:

**Academic Competencies**

a. Disciplinary Knowledge
b. Critical Thinking
c. Communication Skills
d. Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning
e. Self-Directed Learning
f. Information Literacy
g. Engagement in the Process of Discovery or Creation

**Personal Competencies**

h. Multicultural Competence
i. Moral and Ethical Awareness
j. Self-Management
k. Community Engagement

[See Appendix B for background and definitions.]

C. Challenges Facing Higher Education

Financial: Costs of higher education, in particular, the over-reliance on tuition increases; length of time it will take for endowments to recover; increased costs of research; decline of funding for humanities.

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4 These are the basis for “learning outcomes” that are being developed and implemented by colleges. (See Appendix B.)
Political: Education priorities of states; demands for more accountability (e.g., outcome assessments); federal policies and funding priorities; public expectations for affordable, accessible higher education opportunities.

Internal: Reconciling more institutional responsiveness and direction from the center with the collegial or shared governance structures of American universities, e.g., decentralized decision making.

II. Internal Environment

A. Cornell’s Special Challenges (vis-à-vis peer institutions)
   1. Endowment base in comparison to other Ivy institutions
   2. Dual-career issues in a small university town
   3. Reconciling educational breadth and diversity with quality and focus
   4. Forming and sustaining productive collaborations across academic units (e.g., contract and endowed; Ithaca Cornell campus and Weill Cornell Medical College; fundamental disciplines and applied units)

B. Cornell’s Strengths and Opportunities
   1. Breadth and comprehensiveness (“...any study”)
   2. Access and diversity (“any person...”)
   3. Interdisciplinary combinations built on strong disciplines
   4. Interconnection of liberal and professional education
   5. Public service history and impact (land grant mission)
   6. Faculty creativity and academic entrepreneurialism

C. Cornell’s Major Strategic Challenges Today
   The plan makes several pointed assumptions about the external and internal environment within which Cornell will be operating in the next five years, as follows:
   1. **Intense competition for faculty**—which will increase with retirements over the next ten years.
   2. **Intense competition for students**—at all levels—which makes financial aid, scholarships, and fellowships more critical, but also more expensive.
   3. **Limitations on tuition revenue**—need to reduce the growth rate of tuition increases and need to use a greater proportion for financial aid.
   4. **Increasing infrastructure costs (libraries, research facilities)** of high-quality scholarship and teaching.
5. Declines in state funding for contract colleges and the land grant mission.

6. End of a 50-plus year period of revenue growth— for higher education in general and Cornell in particular.

7. Diverse funding models for different units on campus that create obstacles for cross-college ties and collaborations.

D. Strategic Response or Directions

The following four strategic themes can respond to the changing environment and suggest some broad directions for university actions:

- Focus
- Adaptability
- Coordination
- Efficiency

1. To become more focused, it is necessary to make difficult choices about what to emphasize and what to de-emphasize; what to keep and strengthen; what to downsize or eliminate. These choices need to be made while preserving Ezra Cornell’s original vision.

2. To become more adaptable, Cornell’s administrative arrangements and structures need to be more flexible, to be evaluated and changed on a continual basis, and to have fluidity so that they do not become set in stone.

3. To introduce more coordination, the institution needs more permeable boundaries across fields, disciplines, programs, and colleges, so that both students and faculty can cross these boundaries or transcend them when opportunities to enhance academic excellence emerge and also to ensure that the university uses its intellectual resources efficiently and effectively.

4. To be more efficient, we need to examine administrative structures and policies carefully, with an eye toward creating a tighter fit between our methods of accomplishing tasks and the institution’s goals and aspirations. How can we most efficiently and with the least possible cost deliver and sustain teaching, research, and outreach excellence?

E. Organizational Dilemmas Facing Cornell

These strategic themes raise difficult questions about how the institution can balance the historic strengths it derives from high levels of decentralization with the need for more central coordination or management in some administrative and academic areas. Issues include:

1. Central and unit-level (college) authority: Who makes what kind of decisions? How to coordinate decisions in colleges with decisions at the center?
2. Degree of coordination: How tightly or loosely connected are different parts of the university?

3. How to recognize, nurture, and fund “bottom-up” academic initiatives?

F. Principles of Governance

If there is more strategic oversight and direction from the university center, new mechanisms of involvement and consultation will be necessary in order to:

1. Strengthen collegial organization (shared governance, faculty role).

2. Ensure robust consultative processes (involvement, participation).

3. Maximize transparency (information, communication) insofar as it is feasible.

4. Ensure that the highest standards of ethical behavior are expected of those who are in leadership positions.
Section IV

GOAL AREAS: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Introduction

The following sections identify objectives (ends) within each overarching university goal area (see page 7) and actions (means) for achieving each objective. The objectives, as a whole, suggest that the university move on a significant number of fronts to keep abreast of the competition, respond to a rapidly changing environment, and enhance academic strengths, despite resource constraints. This may be difficult in some cases, and thus priorities are necessary. The action items for each objective identify a few key ways to make significant progress on these objectives over the next five years. Some of these involve resources and some do not. The actions for a given objective should be read as a package, but it is feasible to phase in the low-cost ones first, depending on the availability of resources.

It also is important to recognize that the university is currently making significant efforts and achieving successes in several of these areas. By including an objective related to ongoing efforts, this plan affirms the importance of such activities and proposes to focus more energy on that area and push it even higher on the university’s agenda. Whereas all of the objectives are important as such, resource constraints (time, effort, money) will make it essential to set priorities among the objectives for the next five years, and with this in mind, each section concludes with a brief statement proposing priorities among the objectives.
Overview

List of Objectives for Each Overarching University Goal

PROMOTING FACULTY EXCELLENCE

1. Continue robust faculty recruitment in order to maintain or even increase faculty size in select areas.
2. Increase the diversity of faculty at a rapid rate.
3. Ensure competitive faculty compensation.
4. Develop and implement policies to retain highly valued faculty.
5. Devise new mechanisms or policies for rewarding outstanding faculty and for continually assessing faculty performance as scholars and teachers.
6. Foster an exciting intellectual environment through more dialogue and engagement.
7. Develop ways to enable faculty to focus their time on being highly productive in their core academic activities (research, scholarship, and creativity; teaching; public engagement).

PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

1. Provide a more unified and shared educational experience for Cornell undergraduates.
2. Strengthen the educational impact of international opportunities and experiences for students.
3. Create and sustain a culture that supports teaching excellence in all academic units.
4. Strengthen institutional structures that promote pedagogical innovations both centrally and within colleges and programs.
5. Strengthen efforts to attract and educate an excellent and diverse body of undergraduate students.
6. Strengthen the capacity of graduate and professional programs to recruit and educate a diverse body of the very best students.

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVITY

1. Increase the number of Cornell departments or fields that have achieved world leadership in their areas.
2. Build and maintain world leadership in a select set of departments within the following broad areas—humanities and the arts; life sciences and agricultural sciences; physical sciences and engineering; social sciences; and professional schools and programs.
3. Strengthen support for and recognition of emerging interdisciplinary areas, while ensuring excellence in disciplines as a foundation.

4. Significantly improve institution-wide services for the administration and support of research grants (including government, foundation, and industry funding).

5. Maintain and selectively strengthen in cost-effective ways the core infrastructures for research, scholarship, and creativity, including in particular libraries and shared research facilities.

6. Encourage productive, mutually beneficial collaborations between faculty and students in Ithaca-based programs and faculty and students at Weill Cornell Medical College and Graduate School.

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

1. Construct a unified concept and coherent organizational model for the university’s outreach and public engagement mission.

2. Strongly connect extension and outreach to on-campus research and educational strengths.

3. Develop rigorous, systematic evaluations of all outreach and extension programs.

4. Promote stronger collaborations and partnerships between the university and stakeholders that can make use of and strengthen Cornell’s research (e.g., business, K-12 schools, nonprofit organizations, government).

5. Make public engagement a distinctive feature of education at Cornell.

PROMOTING STAFF EXCELLENCE

1. Give priority to retention of highly qualified staff in valued positions as the university reorganizes to address budgetary constraints.

2. Attract a talented and diverse workforce to Cornell.

3. Be an exemplary employer across the entire spectrum of staff.

4. Provide job skill training to staff in a variety of venues.

5. Sustain and, wherever possible, enhance flexibility in the workplace and workforce.

6. Work with the local community to keep Ithaca and Tompkins County vibrant places to live and work.
PROMOTING FACULTY EXCELLENCE

Introduction: There is a critical need to renew the faculty ranks proactively, given anticipated retirements over the next ten to fifteen years. This effort is essential to keep abreast of and deal with intense competition for faculty, to reduce losses of valued faculty through enhanced retention efforts, and to take advantage of an historic opportunity to increase the diversity of the faculty as a whole. This section emphasizes these issues.

Objective 1: Continue robust faculty recruitment in order to maintain or even increase faculty size in select areas.

[Rationale: Many Cornell departments are already relatively small, compared to peer institutions, and it is critical to maintain or selectively enhance faculty size in distinguished departments and to have the capacity to invest in faculty positions in areas of substantial potential and opportunity.]

Actions:

a. Emphasize a faculty recruitment strategy of building from the bottom (recruiting new Ph.D.s and “rising stars”) over the next five years, recognizing that this may not be appropriate for all units or at all times within a given unit.

b. In strategically important areas, where a significant percentage of high-quality faculty are nearing retirement, pre-fill during the next five years a significant proportion of expected faculty retirements across the next ten years.

c. Develop and sustain state-of-the-art dual-career efforts and support designed to offset the disadvantages of a small, geographically isolated community.5

d. Develop regular, systematic, and transparent mechanisms for reallocating faculty positions across academic units in order to strengthen select areas.

e. Increase funding for new faculty positions by making this a priority of fund-raising.

Objective 2: Increase the diversity of faculty at a rapid rate.

[Rationale: Diversity is a high priority over the next five years, important in principle given core values of the institution and of significant educational value to students and programs (see Appendix A). Having a more diverse faculty is also important because of the increasing diversity of the student body and larger society. The next five to ten years offer an unusual period of opportunity for Cornell to increase the diversity of its faculty, given prospective faculty retirements.]

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5 The university policy that precludes other university employment for a faculty member who is denied tenure may warrant reconsideration in order to allow dual-career-related exceptions under carefully defined conditions.
Actions:

a. Develop targets for gender, racial, and ethnic diversity of faculty in all units that take account of both the pool of available candidates (pipeline) and the importance of critical mass within units or fields.

b. Expand the pools from which we recruit faculty by more broadly defining faculty positions, wherever possible.

c. To enhance pipelines of racially and ethnically diverse faculty candidates, develop stronger ties to faculty at institutions that historically educate African American, Hispanic, or Native American students.

d. Ensure that colleges and departments give appropriate attention to diversity throughout the recruitment process, from the point at which positions are defined, to the short lists and interview lists, to the final decision stage.

e. Develop in each college an efficient mechanism for monitoring progress in searches (e.g., by assigning this task to an individual or faculty committee).

f. Make more proactive and expeditious efforts to reduce the departures of high-quality faculty who contribute to the gender and racial/ethnic diversity of the university community.

g. Establish better funding mechanisms at the center of the university and in colleges to promote and encourage vigorous efforts to recruit, nurture, and retain a diverse faculty in terms of gender and race/ethnicity.

Objective 3: Ensure competitive faculty compensation.

[Rationale: The university has invested substantial resources over the last ten years to raise faculty salaries to a competitive level among its peers, and it cannot afford to lose ground on this dimension.]

Actions:

a. Keep faculty salaries at or above the median among peer institutions.

b. Benchmark and regularly assess fringe benefits to ensure that these remain abreast of the competition, including work/life issues.

c. Assess and benchmark start-up packages and ongoing support for research, defining a set of peer universities for this purpose.

Objective 4: Develop and implement policies to retain highly valued faculty.

a. Enhance efforts to retain highly valued faculty by ensuring that they have strong support for their research, teaching, and public engagement.

b. When working to retain highly valued faculty who have offers, be proactive by making counteroffers promptly and addressing work-life issues (e.g., dual careers) early.
c. Make aggressive and extraordinary efforts to retain early- to mid-career faculty who are “rising stars” or highly promising or accomplished for their career stage.

**Objective 5:** Devise new mechanisms or policies for rewarding outstanding faculty and for continually assessing faculty performance as scholars and teachers.

*Rationale:* To retain and nurture outstanding faculty (including non-tenure-track faculty), all available means of recognition and reward are important, not only salary. Relatively modest measures may reap significant benefits. This also implies well-understood methods or metrics of assessing the quality of the research, teaching, and public engagement, appropriate to the discipline or field.

**Actions:**

a. Develop a provost fund for providing special monetary rewards (bonuses, summer pay, and seed funds for research) for exceptional academic accomplishments.

b. Assess whether there is sufficient merit differentiation in salary decisions within colleges and departments to reward faculty who already are or are likely to become leaders in their discipline or field.

c. Develop a campus-wide effort to nominate candidates every year for national prizes and awards.

d. Give special recognition to and publicize faculty who receive distinguished academic awards and honors from their peers.

e. Develop in each college or academic unit performance assessments for all faculty to promote excellence in faculty teaching, research, and public engagement and to ensure it is recognized and rewarded.

**Objective 6:** Foster an exciting intellectual environment through more dialogue and engagement.

*Rationale:* The academic/intellectual environment is critical to the attractiveness of Cornell and to the retention of faculty. A negative department culture is commonly mentioned in exit interviews, and, as one example of impact, it is a key factor in the departure of women from the faculty.

**Actions:**

a. Devise new ways to foster constructive dialogue on important intellectual issues among faculty, students, and staff within and across academic units.

b. Promote intellectually rewarding cross-department, cross-college, or interdisciplinary collaborations among faculty.
c. Develop a revamped faculty club on campus and ensure that there are conversation spaces for faculty, postdocs, and graduate students across areas of campus.

d. Assist department chairs in their efforts to create and sustain a positive department culture in which faculty engage in constructive exchange on their scholarship and work together effectively as department or program colleagues.

[NOTE: See objective 6 under staff excellence.]

Objective 7: Develop ways to enable faculty to focus their time on being highly productive in their core academic activities (research, scholarship, and creativity; teaching; public engagement).

[Rationale: In many areas, this plan proposes action items that require more faculty effort and time (e.g., on teaching excellence), and therefore it is important to re-assess how the institution is currently using the time of faculty. Every effort should be made to focus that time on teaching, scholarship, and public engagement. Below are several possible measures.]

Actions:

a. Have the provost, deans, and department chairs review how they use faculty time to accomplish administrative tasks.

b. Streamline university and college procedures that make substantial use of faculty time and draw them away from their core academic activities (e.g., reduce the number or size of faculty committees).

c. Carefully consider the impact of staff on faculty productivity in their core academic activities when deciding staffing levels and functions.

Conclusion: Faculty Priorities

Faculty renewal and faculty diversity are the two highest priorities here. Across the next ten years, it is reasonable to expect a significant proportion of current faculty to enter retirement – in 2008–2009, nearly half of Cornell professorial faculty members were 55 or older. Renewal of the faculty ranks is a major issue for the institution at a time when the capacity of the university to recruit faculty has been hampered by budgetary problems and the national financial downturn in 2008–2009. The large number of anticipated retirements also is an opportunity to increase the diversity of the faculty ranks at a rate faster than has occurred in the past. While there have been small-to-modest gains in the gender diversity of faculty ranks over the last ten years, there has been little progress toward greater racial and ethnic diversity. Forthcoming retirements offer an historic opportunity to build greater diversity.
Thus, the Strategic Planning Advisory Council proposes priorities based on objectives 1 and 2: (1) *Enhance the capacity of the institution to recruit and rebuild an outstanding core of faculty in order to maintain and strengthen departments and programs, especially those that are strategically important to the university and have academic strength or potential strength that makes them worthy of investment.* Pre-filling positions when strategically advantageous, focusing on hiring new Ph.D.s or “rising stars,” and dealing with dual-career problems created by our location are especially important actions here. (2) *Substantially strengthen efforts to increase the diversity of Cornell faculty by setting explicit targets for gender and underrepresented minorities and by improving recruitment processes and accountability mechanisms from the start of a search to its completion.* Efficient mechanisms are important to send consistent signals about diversity and to ensure that departments and colleges are held accountable for making progress. The action items for diversity (Objective 2) should be treated as a package.
PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Introduction: This section emphasizes ways to strengthen teaching across the university and ways for students to take full advantage of Cornell’s educational breadth – through, for example, field-based or international studies that enable students to “engage the world.” The focus is student educational experiences, inside or outside the classroom, that are directly connected to their academic work. Because of this focus, this section is not intended to be exhaustive or comprehensive, and it is important to acknowledge that there are many other activities and services related to physical and mental health and well-being that are essential to the development of students, academically and personally. This section is organized around the notion that student learning at a university is based heavily on high-quality teaching, and moreover that a key way to leverage Cornell’s special qualities is to provide students educationally rich opportunities for international and public-engagement experiences, in particular those that involve faculty and interconnect the classroom and the world. The Strategic Planning Advisory Council contends that these particular components of Cornell students’ educational experience warrant special attention and emphasis over the next five years.

Objective 1: Provide a more unified and shared educational experience for Cornell undergraduates.

[Rationale: Cornell is the most educationally diverse research university among its peers. This objective is designed to encourage students to experience that educational diversity by adding convergent or common intellectual experiences early in their time at Cornell. For example, these could involve additional living-learning programs in residence halls, common courses for Cornell students, or courses in colleges around a common theme. The idea is to promote a more shared educational experience at the university, while recognizing and building on the distinctiveness of college-based educational programs.]

Actions:

a. Define a set of institution-wide core competencies to guide teaching and programming. (See Appendix B.)

b. Create a series of common intellectual experiences within the first two years directed at core competencies, including living-learning programs and formal coursework.

c. Have colleges reassess their programs and make appropriate revisions in their courses and course requirements to realize core competencies in ways that are suitable for particular colleges, disciplines, or interdisciplinary fields.

d. Encourage students to cross college and program boundaries in pursuit of their educational goals, and encourage colleges to reduce the inherent difficulties (posed by transfer pricing policies and college constraints).
Objective 2: Strengthen the educational impact of international opportunities and experiences for students.

[Rationale: International education and experiences could be a distinguishing feature of a Cornell education, especially when combined with field-based (service) learning and other ways that Cornell students can and do engage the world. Cultural awareness and sensitivity are important core competencies that international programs and experiences help to develop. We need to be clear about what we want students to gain from these experiences, and the development of learning outcomes by the university’s Core Assessment Committee will make this more feasible. See Appendix B.]

Actions:

a. Evaluate tuition, financial aid, and administrative structures for study abroad programs (external and Cornell-based) to ensure that they are affordable and sustainable and also of high quality.

b. As a complement to credit programs, expand noncredit opportunities such as international internships, global service learning, and summer work experiences with an important educational component.

c. Assess the appropriate proportions of international students in programs, considering the quality of the applicant pools, the educational value of having students from diverse international and cultural backgrounds interact with domestic students, and the costs of attracting the very best of these international students.

d. Ensure that faculty participation and involvement in international programs (including study abroad) are sufficient to promote and sustain high-quality educational experiences for students.

e. Create inter-university collaborations with top-tier universities abroad in order to foster two-way flows of students, while being selective about the number of such programs.

Objective 3: Create and sustain a culture that supports effective teaching in all academic units.

[Rationale: Cornell, like most top-tier research universities, has a strong culture in support of research and scholarship. It needs to maintain an equally strong culture in support of outstanding teaching. Effective teaching is a central responsibility of departments and programs, and a key component of each individual faculty member’s professional activity. This means, for example, that faculty members should remain actively involved in teaching across their careers, recognizing that loads may vary due to other responsibilities or research grant support; the institution needs to ensure the best scholars are in the classroom because this has an important impact on students’ education and represents a good model for junior faculty. Involvement in mentoring and advising is also important. Moreover,
“signals” from top to bottom of the institution need to convey consistently the value of effective teaching, advising, and mentoring.]

**Actions:**

a. Ensure that all academic units have a robust form of assessment that generates full information, includes some type of student feedback and peer assessment, and provides feedback to teachers that enables them to improve their teaching continually.

b. Strengthen Cornell’s resources for instructional support, through integrated efforts that involve both central and college-based activities, so that faculty (especially junior faculty) have easy access to new pedagogies and “best practices” for being effective teachers.

c. Recognize and celebrate pedagogical innovation and strong teachers who are responsive to students and rigorous in their approach to teaching.

d. Ensure that academic leaders (chairs, deans, and the provost) communicate clear expectations about the importance of teaching and hold programs and individual faculty responsible for demonstrating teaching effectiveness (e.g., rewarding excellent teaching in resource allocations and salary decisions).

e. Examine current policies on course reductions and “buy-outs” of teaching, and assess whether alternative forms of relief (e.g., from administrative and committee responsibilities) or monetary rewards (e.g., summer salary, research monies) can effectively substitute for course reductions.

f. Ensure that senior faculty members with teaching appointments remain actively involved in and committed to teaching and mentoring students over their careers at Cornell.

**Objective 4:** Strengthen institutional structures that promote pedagogical innovations both centrally and within colleges and programs.

[Rationale: Faculty have many reasons not to devote more time to enhance the innovativeness of their teaching, adopt new pedagogies, or experiment with new methods, given the opportunity costs of such time investments (e.g., time from research and other professional activities). There is a national market for excellent research, but no comparable market for excellent teaching, which makes the local institutional policies, practices, and priorities of particular importance for teaching.]

**Actions:**

a. Strengthen the capacity (administrative and budgetary) of the Office of the Provost to facilitate and support educational innovations.

b. Encourage faculty to experiment with new pedagogies (e.g., field-based learning) and new technologies, recognizing the different pedagogies appropriate for different disciplines and programs.
c. Establish funds to provide summer salary or other forms of support to faculty with creative proposals for new courses that meet important educational needs of students and that cross intellectual boundaries.

d. Encourage more courses that involve team teaching across colleges or disciplines within them by being more flexible about faculty teaching credits.

e. Promote and support educational innovations beyond the classroom (e.g., service learning), taking advantage of Cornell’s living-learning environment on campus and its public engagement mission and related programs.

Objective 5: Strengthen efforts to attract and educate an excellent and diverse body of undergraduate students.

[Rationale: Attracting an excellent and diverse student body is a critical aspect of being a top university, and competition for students is growing. Having a diverse student body is integral to Cornell’s core value of embracing difference and diversity (e.g., see Appendix A). Diversity generates important educational benefits because it brings students in contact with those different from themselves and gives them the experience of living in and learning from a diverse and collaborative community. This is particularly important in a global, multicultural society and world. Excellent, highly ranked departments and faculty are crucial to attracting students, as are competitive award packages. Below are several ways that Cornell can do a better job of highlighting certain university strengths to attract the most promising and diverse student body possible—especially by emphasizing the breadth and comprehensiveness of its programs and the opportunities for working closely with outstanding faculty. The implication is that in recruiting undergraduate students, the university needs to more effectively or consistently bring to the foreground the personal attention from faculty, research opportunities, and opportunities for service learning that students have at Cornell.]

Actions:

a. Maintain need-blind admissions and the competitiveness of financial packages for undergraduate students.

b. In order to increase significantly the proportion of underrepresented minorities and also students from other cultures, develop targets and plans for enhancing diversity, as well as support mechanisms designed to facilitate and promote the academic success and retention of minorities at Cornell.

c. Redesign the university web site to highlight the special opportunities that students have at Cornell to work closely with faculty and the wide variety of courses and programs available to Cornell students.

d. In recruiting students, emphasize the capacity of Cornell to provide opportunities for undergraduate research (e.g., Presidential Research Scholars),
study abroad, civic engagement, field-based learning, advising and mentoring by faculty, and the advantages of its living-learning environment.

e. Implement and expand institutional mechanisms for encouraging and supporting undergraduate research with faculty supervision.

f. Develop more effective ways to ensure students have access to advising of high quality.

g. Support strong efforts to build pipelines (e.g., through charter schools, summer programs, and the like) that significantly increase success in the recruiting of minority students.

h. Explore whether some of Cornell’s named scholarships could be used more effectively to enhance the yield among the very best applicants to Cornell.

**Objective 6:** Strengthen the capacity of graduate and professional programs to recruit and educate a diverse body of the very best students.

[Rationale: The quality of graduate students is critical to the stature of departments and programs and to the recruitment and retention of faculty. Enhancing diversity is critical to building a strong pipeline of candidates into the academic fields. The emphasis here is on maintaining the university’s competitiveness (the first three items) and improving the field system.]

**Actions:**

a. Maintain competitive stipends and health benefits for graduate students.

b. Make fellowships more widely available to entering Ph.D. students, especially in disciplines or fields that are high in quality and important to the university, and where fellowships are essential to maintain competitiveness.

c. Examine the feasibility and trade-offs of reducing graduate tuition rates to the levels of peer institutions.

d. Develop a stronger, more organized web presentation on graduate education at Cornell that highlights Cornell’s research infrastructure, its distinguished faculty, and the opportunities for collaborative and interdisciplinary work.

e. To increase significantly the proportion of underrepresented minorities in graduate programs over the next five years, establish targets for diversity and develop plans for achieving them in graduate fields and professions where women and minorities are underrepresented.

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6 A 2007 document, entitled “A Vision Statement for a Graduate Community Initiative” (GCI) and commissioned by the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, makes a number of recommendations for improving the support for and services provided to graduate students. These include proposals for a Graduate Student Center and Graduate Resource Center that would enhance institutional career services for graduate students. The GCI document warrants continued discussion and consideration by the university, with appropriate weighing of the financial trade-offs.
f. Consolidate graduate fields or reorganize small fields into clusters if and when such reorganizations have a strong academic justification, create a “critical mass” of graduate students, and enhance the research of Ph.D. students.

g. Create effective mechanisms at the institutional level for supporting the development of graduate students as teachers, including the possibility of seed funds if needed to promote development and preparation.

h. Expand professional master’s programs where market-based opportunities dovetail with the academic strengths of a Cornell program, taking account of any adverse effects on current programs of high quality.

i. Develop regular mechanisms at the institutional level for assessing the quality and impact of professional master’s programs.

[NOTE: See Objective 5 under public engagement.]

**Conclusion: Education Priorities**

While all of the objectives are important to move on in some way, improving teaching and enhancing the diversity that students experience at Cornell are the priorities for the next five years, proposed by the Strategic Planning Advisory Council. Cornell should strive for a commitment to quality teaching that is unsurpassed among major research universities. This requires a university-wide cultural shift. Specifically: (1) *Create a culture of support for teaching across each and every academic unit of the university*, by consistently aligning symbolic signals, assessments, opportunities for innovation, faculty rewards and recognition, and the teaching components of graduate education. (2) *Increase the diversity of the undergraduate and graduate student body*, both to improve the quality of the education that Cornell undergraduate and graduate students receive and to build on the fact that the university is an influential pipeline for diversity into occupations and professions where minorities or women are underrepresented. These two priorities, along with others here and in subsequent sections, will contribute to an important theme: providing students a distinctive education that appropriately leverages Cornell’s uniqueness and strengths.
EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVITY

**Introduction:** This section emphasizes the importance of raising the quality and stature of select departments to a position of academic leadership and of providing support for research, scholarship, and creativity in a careful, strategic, and cost-effective way. The latter is particularly important because of the increasing costs of research, the competitive environment for external support for research, and the financial pressures on areas with less potential for external funding (i.e., humanities and the arts).

**Objective 1:** Increase the number of Cornell departments or fields that have achieved world leadership in their areas.

* [Rationale: In the short term, this is imperative to preserve academic excellence, even in a period of limited resources. For the longer term, a distinguished institution of higher education must achieve leadership in a significant number of departments, disciplines, or fields. In 1995 National Research Council (NRC) rankings, nineteen of Cornell's graduate fields were ranked in the top ten (in the U.S.), and currently four of Cornell's professional schools or programs are ranked first or second in their respective fields. A set of well-understood and transparent criteria is needed for future assessments.]

**Actions:**

a. Place five more disciplines or fields in the top ten among U.S. peers using criteria such as those specified by the National Research Council (NRC), maintain the current number one ranking of several Cornell schools or colleges, and move at least one professional school into the top ten among its peers.

b. Identify and reward departments that become or already are world leaders in their disciplines or fields.

c. Develop better data, criteria, and procedures for evaluating and tracking the quality of research, scholarship, and creativity of faculty, departments, and colleges.

d. Require departments to develop strategic plans for enhancing or achieving academic distinction and leadership.

e. Selectively invest in departments that demonstrate the greatest capacity to build on current strengths and achieve new intellectual heights.

**Objective 2:** Build and maintain world leadership in a select set of departments within the following broad areas: humanities and the arts; life sciences and agricultural sciences; physical sciences and engineering; social sciences; and professional schools and programs.
[Rationale: Cornell must achieve and maintain academic distinction in a reasonable representation of departments within these broad areas, given the breadth and comprehensiveness of its mission. This implies that it is important to set priorities among departments and programs within these groupings. It is also critical to promote greater coordination and collaboration that enhances opportunities for departments to improve their stature. Cornell’s history of academic distinction in several professional schools, which interweave the pursuit of fundamental knowledge with its use and impact on the world, also should be enhanced and nurtured. While it may not be feasible for every department to reach the pinnacle in its field, each should have aspirations that are ambitious yet realistic.]

Actions:

a. In order to develop new academic initiatives and advice on fields for strategic investment or disinvestment, use current internal advisory groups for the life sciences and social sciences and establish internal faculty advisory groups for humanities and the arts and for physical sciences and engineering, drawing on the diversity that exists in these groups of faculty.7

b. Consider more formal cross-college structures of coordination (e.g., steering committees, shared departments, super-departments, mergers) in disciplines or fields where these would significantly enhance academic excellence and reputation and/or improve the utilization of faculty resources.8

c. Encourage efforts of professional programs and schools to enhance academic quality and generate ties of mutual benefit to basic disciplines.

d. Eliminate, consolidate, or downsize academic departments or programs that (i) are no longer strategically important to the university, or (ii) are of weak quality and do not have the prospect of becoming strong in a reasonable period of time.

e. Promote and support new initiatives that develop “cutting-edge” research and scholarship synergies across these academic groupings (e.g., life sciences, physical sciences, and engineering; humanities and social sciences; life sciences and social sciences; professional programs and basic disciplines).

7 An important role of these internal advisory groups should be to identify areas of strength to build and strengthen. Recently, the Life Sciences Task Force Report (October 1, 2009) identified three such areas for the life sciences: computational biology; genetics and genomics; and molecular and cellular biology. The Social Sciences Task Force (October 1, 2009) recommends public policy for the social sciences. This strategic plan is intentionally silent on whether these are optimal areas for the life sciences or social sciences respectively. Exploring or developing such ideas further should be a key responsibility for ongoing internal advisory groups of faculty, charged with advising the university administration on specific academic directions within and across the disciplinary groups and professional schools and programs. Whereas such groups already exist for the life sciences and social sciences, they do not exist in the other areas.

8 For example, the Management Programs Task Force of October 5, 2009, suggests ways to interlink Cornell’s three accredited business programs, and the Social Science Task Force Report of October 1, 2009, identifies a range of different models for strengthening connections within social science disciplines that crosscut colleges.
Objective 3: Strengthen support for and recognition of emerging interdisciplinary areas, while ensuring excellence in disciplines as a foundation.

[Rationale: Interdisciplinary research including international area studies, grounded in strong disciplines, is an historic strength of Cornell. This is important to remaining in the forefront of scholarship and research and to contributing to solutions for societal challenges (e.g., poverty, environment). Moreover, interdisciplinary research and scholarship are ways to enhance or leverage the distinctiveness of Cornell. It is important to stress that strong disciplines are a necessary condition for strong interdisciplinary efforts or programs.]

Actions:

a. Encourage departments to (a) recruit faculty likely to have an impact beyond the hiring unit, and (b) include faculty from more than one discipline or college on faculty search committees.

b. Ensure support and encouragement for untenured faculty whose scholarly work extends beyond traditional department structures, including clear expectations that their interdisciplinary or cross-departmental research will be fairly evaluated in renewal, tenure, and promotion decisions.

c. Promote grassroots development of new interdisciplinary initiatives by improving the capacity of colleges and the provost's office to identify, set priorities among, and nurture interdisciplinary efforts emerging from the faculty.

d. Establish more effective procedures for encouraging and supporting the preparation of interdisciplinary proposals for external grants, traineeships, or contracts with a broad impact across departments and colleges.

e. Regularly assess interdisciplinary programs, supported by university funds, to ensure that they continue to involve faculty from multiple academic units and are magnets for excellence.

f. Examine whether existing seed funds across campus are being used effectively to stimulate major new interdisciplinary initiatives.

Objective 4: Significantly improve institution-wide services for the administration and support of research grants (including government, foundation, and industry funding).

[Rationale: The university needs to minimize administrative burdens on researchers and work to facilitate better their capacity to compete for research funding. Such investments could be paid back promptly by increasing grant support across the university. University-wide efforts and practices should foster and sustain a culture of proactive, solution-oriented, collaborative, customer-focused administrative services where actively consulting and partnering with researchers is the norm.]
Actions:

a. Identify and eliminate administrative barriers to successful competition for funding, including barriers associated with the negotiation of intellectual property.

b. Develop and successfully implement financial accounting and research administration systems in a manner that identifies and meets the needs of all stakeholders: administrators, faculty, and support staff both in units as well as centrally.

c. Keep abreast of external regulatory trends (and proposed changes) and ensure that the regulatory requirements are adequately but not over-zealously met.

d. Develop and maintain efficient staffing structures for research administration across campus in order to handle the administrative aspects of the research process as much as possible, e.g., for proposal development, financial management, contract management, protocol administration, human subjects review, data stewardship, and hiring.

e. Establish clear expectations, qualifications, and competencies for research administrators and train or hire highly qualified individuals to serve in these roles in all colleges.

f. In support of excellence in research, review performance of research administrators with established performance standards, including customer satisfaction and assessment by researchers and college research officers.

g. Effectively participate in advocacy directed at funding agencies in support of the needs of higher education, principles of academic freedom, and capacities to conduct fundamental research.

Objective 5: Maintain and selectively strengthen in cost-effective ways the core infrastructures for research, scholarship, and creativity, including in particular libraries and shared research facilities.

[Rationale: The financial challenges of the institution are exerting significant pressures on these resources, which are essential to the recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty and to Cornell’s academic reputation. The libraries are a well-recognized strength of the university, and Cornell has exercised national and international leadership in the development of “state-of-the-art” shared research facilities. In light of constrained resources, it is important to define and track the changing needs of diverse users of these facilities and to invest selectively to ensure effective and efficient support for faculty and student research.]

Objective 5A. University Library

[Rationale: The library is foundational to excellence in virtually all departments and programs. It is the “core facility” for humanists, who in particular need access to
books and monographs; natural and social scientists need access in particular to digital resources, open source journals, and the like. It is also important to emphasize that the libraries are integral to the educational experience of students at all levels. However, recent cuts to the budget for library acquisitions and burgeoning publication costs have threatened the competitive standing of Cornell’s library, and this could hamper attempts to recruit outstanding faculty, especially in the humanities. Strengthening the collections and ensuring that they are at a competitive level should be a high priority, as should be a recognition and understanding of the differential needs in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities.]

**Actions:**

a. Assess how the university libraries are supporting the research and scholarship of faculty.

b. Develop deeper engagement between faculty and librarians across campus in order to identify priorities for collection building; to enhance support for new, under-supported, or interdisciplinary fields; and to respond to emerging needs in areas such as data curation, visual resources, and digital culture.

c. Ensure that collaborations and partnerships with other libraries serve the needs of faculty and students at Cornell and strengthen faculty scholarship and productivity.

d. Examine and track the library needs of students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) to ensure strong services to support their academic work.

**Objective 5B. Shared Research Facilities**

*Rationale: Cornell should strive to remain a leader in the development and provision of core research facilities for local, national, and international science communities. Financial pressures and constraints mean that strategic choices will need to be made. The action items below suggest some guiding principles.]*

**Actions:**

a. Selectively maintain and promote core shared facilities in the sciences and social sciences, taking account of the research needs of local, national, and international scientific communities, external-funding opportunities, and cost efficiency.

b. Review the university’s investments in shared research facilities on a regular basis to ensure that these facilities maximize impact on the productivity and reputation of the university in national and international domains.

c. In using central resources to support shared research facilities, priority should be given to matching funds for external funding that strengthens existing shared
facilities, impacts multiple research groups on and off campus, leverages Cornell’s investment, and enhances its academic stature.

**Objective 6:** Encourage productive, mutually beneficial collaborations between faculty and students in Ithaca-based programs and faculty and students at Weill Cornell Medical College and Graduate School.

*Rationale:* The geographical separation of the university’s main campus and the medical school creates special challenges and makes it difficult to take full advantage of potential synergies in research, teaching, and clinical programs. Some challenges are historical and cultural and others are administrative. Historically, Cornell’s Ithaca-based campus and medical school have had few academic ties across related disciplines or fields, and administratively, there are unique and special obstacles to collaboration. This is changing, in part because of new capabilities in electronic communication and intercampus transportation, and in part because of increasing potential for cross-fertilization between basic and applied biological sciences (e.g., importance of “translational research”) and between engineering and medical fields. Recent examples of growing collaborations include joint retreats, collaborative seed grants in biomedical science, and dual faculty appointments. Such collaborations can generate “value added” results in research and strengthen the university’s competitive position in the recruitment and retention of faculty. It is important to continue and to nurture this momentum over the next five years. The actions below exemplify some of the important steps to enable fruitful collaborations to emerge among the faculty.

**Actions:**

a. Develop mechanisms that allow graduate students to engage in research and coursework on both campuses by addressing issues such as academic requirements, student housing, and health insurance.

b. Identify areas of common and complementary interest between the life sciences and other academic disciplines and nurture these by encouraging joint retreats or joint seminars among interested faculty in both locations.

c. Assess the main administrative barriers to collaboration by faculty and students and to joint externally-funded research projects and work to resolve those.

d. Explore additional joint recruitment efforts and joint appointments that would be of mutual advantage to Cornell’s Ithaca-based and Weill Cornell programs.
Conclusion: Research Priorities

The Strategic Planning Advisory Council recommends three, interrelated priorities for research, scholarship, and creativity. First and foremost is the importance of (1) selectively nurturing and building world leadership in a greater number of departments within each of the major academic groupings: life sciences and agricultural sciences; physical sciences and engineering; social sciences; humanities and the arts; and professional schools and programs. Focus is needed within each of these areas, but to reach the aspirations of this plan, it is important to achieve world leadership in more departments. Building innovative bridges across them may be critical (e.g., physical and life sciences, life and social sciences, humanities and the social sciences). This is a longer-term priority, whereas the next two address more immediate needs or problems. (2) As indicated by Objective 5, the university libraries and shared research facilities need special attention over the next five years because of financial pressures on these core infrastructures and the changing and varied needs across disciplines and fields. Given the prospective costs of such facilities, the university needs to be focused and strategic in how it defines and works to meet the current and future needs within and across disciplines and fields. (3) As indicated by Objective 3, it is important to make expeditious changes in how the university supports and administers external research grant funding (see relevant action items on page 32). Solving such problems should yield benefits in the form of greater external research funding that could offset the additional costs required. The second and third priorities are important to the first but also to the recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty.
PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Introduction: “Public engagement” recasts the university’s outreach mission in broader and more inclusive terms. It subsumes the full panoply of ways that Cornell’s faculty, staff, and students make meaningful contributions to societal challenges and problems (e.g., environment, health, poverty), from participating in public discourse to applied research to extension programs. The term “public engagement” is adopted from President David Skorton’s State of the University Address (October 23, 2009).

Objective 1: Construct a unified concept and coherent organizational model for the university’s outreach and public engagement mission.

[Rationale: The educational and research activities of the university’s outreach efforts are highly fragmented and scattered. For example, public engagement includes formal extension programs; translational research; clinical programs; technology transfer; education programs such as service learning; international engagements; and faculty involvement in public policy or as public intellectuals. This plan calls for greater connectivity among many of these disparate programs and activities, but without introducing new central administrative structures or unacceptable constraints on academic entrepreneurialism. The administration of public engagement should be as lean as possible in order to enable a “bottom-up” entrepreneurial spirit to blossom.]

Actions:

a. Embrace a broad and inclusive definition of the land grant mission of the university that is directed at national and international communities, as well as local and state communities.

b. Recognize and highlight the public engagement efforts of faculty across endowed, contract, and medical colleges.

c. Develop an integrated and more user-friendly web portal for delivery of public engagement programs and activities, including extension.

d. Make better use of electronic and other media to foster greater public recognition and appreciation of Cornell’s public engagement accomplishments.

e. Develop university-wide mechanisms to promote interconnections across forms or types of public engagement (e.g., extension, technology transfer, translational research, clinical, international programs, and service learning) without introducing new central structures.

f. Engage stakeholder groups and appropriate partner agencies in assessing and planning for the future of publicly supported extension activities.
Objective 2: Strongly connect extension and outreach to on-campus research and educational strengths.

[Rationale: The strengths of the outreach mission derive from the research and educational strengths of the university and the capacity of the institution and its faculty to build and sustain enduring collaborations with stakeholders. Emphasizing the ties to on-campus research and education is a way to establish boundaries for outreach, enhance its quality, and bring more focus and coherence to the university’s public engagement programs.]

Actions:

a. Emphasize evidence-based or scientifically based extension and outreach efforts that meet the educational or informational needs of stakeholders (ranging from local communities to New York State to international arenas).

b. Make research an overarching theme for interconnecting community-based extension programs with on-campus research as well as with basic and applied science in the life sciences, agriculture, engineering, and medicine.

c. Invest in and build on outreach programs with strong, mutually beneficial ties to research and educational programs on campus, particularly those that can be funded by external grants; reduce focus and resources directed at programs without such ties or the potential for external grants.

d. Develop enhanced strategic partnerships between on-campus education programs and community-based extension and outreach.

Objective 3: Develop rigorous, systematic evaluations of all outreach and extension programs.

[Rationale: A more institution-wide approach and common set of criteria would be helpful as would ongoing methods of gathering information on quality and impact.]

Actions:

a. Develop explicit criteria for evaluating programs that emphasize quality, importance to the university, and impact on society.

b. Include an external-review component in regular evaluations of outreach programs.

c. Establish an institutional mechanism for collecting data and information on the quality and impact of extension and outreach programs and for conducting evaluations.

Objective 4: Promote stronger collaborations and partnerships between the university and stakeholders that can make use of and strengthen Cornell’s research (e.g., business, K-12 schools, nonprofit organizations, government).
[**Rationale:** Partnerships with stakeholders are an important way for the university to identify policy-related problems and effectively bring the research expertise of faculty to bear on them. Strong outreach and extension programs tend to require productive two-way interactions between researchers and stakeholders.]

**Actions:**

a. Improve university mechanisms for making technologies and knowledge that can be defined as public goods readily available to those who can benefit from them (e.g., business, industry, government).

b. Encourage the development (e.g., in licensing agreements) of ongoing relationships between Cornell researchers and those who use Cornell research innovations for commercial purposes.

c. Promote and support collaborations between faculty and local schools that contribute to the quality of K–12 education in New York State.

d. Explore new partnerships with state, regional, and national industries in order to promote economic development.

e. Build a stronger footprint or base for Cornell’s education, research, and outreach programs in New York City.

**Objective 5:** Make public engagement a distinctive feature of education at Cornell.

[**Rationale:** Cornell has a unique capacity to interweave public engagement with its educational and research programs for students, given its status and history as a private university with a land grant mission. An integration of fundamental science and application of knowledge and its use for the public good should be a distinguishing feature of Cornell programs.]

**Actions:**

a. Explore and assess whether or how engaging the world can become a more integral component of educational programs across campus.

b. Strengthen the participation of faculty and faculty leadership in public engagement programs available to students.

c. Ensure that it is easy and efficient for students to become aware of and access information about public engagement opportunities (e.g., service learning, internships) that serve their educational goals.

d. Develop better institutional mechanisms for coordinating off-campus, non-classroom teaching and field-based or service learning opportunities for faculty and students.

e. Evaluate the organizational structures through which Cornell makes available internships, educational work opportunities, and other off-campus learning to determine how they can be improved.
Conclusion: Public Engagement Priorities

Public engagement subsumes a complex and wide array of disparate programs and activities, formal and informal, with varied ties to academic strengths on campus. In the absence of an assessment, it is difficult to make firm judgments about which types of programs are most important and which are least important for the future. The most immediate and fundamental issue, therefore, is expressed by Objective 3. More specifically: (1) Implement a rigorous assessment of the quality and impact of all public engagement programs with the purpose of deciding where to invest and where to disinvest in the future. This assessment should be framed by a broad, inclusive concept and definition of public engagement (see Objective 1) that gives particular weight to how well public engagement connects to the research and educational strengths of the university.

The quality of public engagement is founded on Cornell’s academic strengths, yet excellence in public engagement can facilitate and enhance research and education in important ways, i.e., there can be reciprocal effects on quality. With this in mind, the second priority is (2) Make public engagement a more integral component of Cornell education and research across campus. This may not apply equally to all programs, but it should be pursued where feasible and, again, with a broad, inclusive definition of public engagement. This should enhance the distinctiveness of education and research at Cornell by taking better advantage of the fact that Cornell interweaves a private, Ivy League research university with a substantial public service mission, stemming from its history as a land grant institution.
PROMOTING STAFF EXCELLENCE

Introduction: Staff excellence is a critical component in virtually all of the university’s academic and nonacademic activities. From postdoctoral fellows to supervisors to administrative assistants and the custodians, staff are essential to achieving the central mission of the university. Cornell’s core values suggest the creation and maintenance of a workplace that provides respect, dignity, and fairness to all employees across all job classifications and units. Moreover, Cornell has a history of constructive relations with its academic and nonacademic and union and nonunion staff, as reflected, for example, in its commitment to a fair and humane workplace. Due to budgetary reductions, however, the recent period has been marked by staff reductions through retirements, attrition, and layoffs, and this has generated heightened levels of uncertainty among staff. This is a context in which to view the objectives and actions below.

Objective 1: Give priority to retention of highly qualified staff in valued positions as the university reorganizes to address budgetary constraints.

[Rationale: In light of constrained resources, the importance of retaining highly qualified staff and the most important positions is greater than normal.]

Actions:

a. Reward staff who assume additional duties due to the reductions in staff and who continue to excel during difficult times.

b. Identify positions that will be needed through the administrative reviews being conducted during the 2009–2010 academic year.

c. Clearly define skills and talents needed to excel in these positions and accurately define positions to reflect expected outcomes.

d. Identify career ladders and training opportunities for advancement.

e. Provide staff annual performance reviews that accurately and honestly assess performance in current positions and identify development plans for growth.

f. Align annual and ongoing salary increase programs to performance, and maintain a clear focus on a total compensation philosophy that will attract and retain top talent.

Objective 2: Attract a talented and diverse workforce to Cornell.

[Rationale: Diversity is a fundamental value of the university (see Appendix A) that applies to staff as well as to faculty and students.
Actions:

a. Ensure, and continuously reinforce by training and communication, that hiring supervisors at all levels are aware of the operational advantages of a diverse workforce.

b. Ensure that effective procedures are in place for reviewing positions, assessing short lists of candidates, and including diversity impact as a factor in hiring decisions.

c. Create and share successful strategies for attracting diverse candidate pools (including more use of social networking to identify candidates).

d. Assign all new hires a mentor/advisor for 90 days.

e. Develop and implement diversity plans for units in consultation with those in the units.

f. In such plans, include explicit targets for gender, racial, and ethnic diversity for job categories in which these groups are underrepresented.

g. Create accurate position descriptions and career path models so that new hires understand their positions and see career opportunities for the future.

h. In order to understand better how to retain women and underrepresented minority staff, particularly in upper management positions, assess their experiences at Cornell.

i. Assess orientation programs at the university and unit levels to ensure that they are informative and enjoyable, so that new employees reach peak efficiency as soon as possible and feel welcome and valued in our community.

Objective 3: Be an exemplary employer across the entire spectrum of staff.

a. Promote family-friendly policies and practices across academic and non-academic units of the university.

b. Recognize and celebrate the value and contributions of staff across all job groupings or classifications.

c. Ensure that all employees receive a “living wage” and can take full advantage of the staff training and development opportunities.

Objective 4: Provide job skill training to staff in a variety of venues.

[Rationale: Providing staff the opportunity to advance their careers, develop their talents, and improve their lives is an important aspect of being a good employer. It is also important to accomplish this in a way that actually does enhance the promotion opportunities of staff.]
Actions:

a. Increase the current job-skill offerings through the Division of Human Resources and track usage, reporting to the college/unit leadership on a regular basis.

b. Make greater use of online short courses and training to develop needed skills and talents.

c. Encourage staff to take advantage of the university “health and well-being” programs.

d. Tie training to identified development plans (obtained in annual performance appraisals).

e. Require supervisors to undergo training in basic supervisory skills and to refresh and update those skills on a regular basis.

Objective 5: Sustain and, wherever possible, enhance flexibility in the workplace and workforce.

[Rationale: This is essential to manage work efficiently, to ensure a healthier workforce, and to support work/life balance. Different approaches or structures are likely to be required in different units, so policies and practices need to be adaptable at the local unit level.]

Actions:

a. Reassess job design and work allocation processes in light of recent declines in the university workforce.

b. Create more collaborative, team-oriented units or work settings in which staff explicitly share responsibility for outcomes, have complementary skills, and have the capacity (talents) to substitute for each other.

c. Encourage supervisors to make arrangements for staff to be away from their work, if necessary, for purposes of professional development.

Objective 6: Work with the local community to keep Ithaca and Tompkins County vibrant places to live and work.

[Rationale: The university and the community are highly interdependent in this respect. A vibrant community is important for many practical reasons, not the least of which is its role in the attraction and retention of outstanding faculty and staff.]

Actions:

a. Promote affordable housing and accessible transportation for members of the university community.

b. Encourage faculty and staff to contribute time and effort to maintaining and strengthening the quality of local schools.
c. Encourage “volunteerism” among the campus community on behalf of the local community.

**Conclusion: Staff Excellence Priorities**

The Strategic Planning Advisory Council finds it difficult to choose priorities among these objectives. All are important to pursue in some way over the next five years if Cornell is to remain a model employer, as affirmed by recent awards. Of these important objectives, however, one stands out above all of the others in this planning effort: *Attracting a diverse staff*. This objective is consistent with a key theme of the plan, namely, to enhance the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in the community as a whole. Staff diversity is an important component of this effort.
Section V

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
[for 2010–2015]

This section of the plan proposes institution-wide initiatives for the next five years and suggests a number of steps to initiate work on them. The central priorities are to enhance faculty excellence and research, scholarship, and creativity, and to do so while enhancing teaching. Below are seven strategic initiatives and a series of proposed steps to initiate work on them. The implementation and success of these initiatives require further consultation with and the support of deans and faculty in colleges, departments, and fields. The Strategic Planning Advisory Council intends these to be collaborative efforts involving faculty, deans, and the provost, as well as students and staff where appropriate.

1. Renew faculty in the context of academic priorities and forthcoming retirements.
   a. Identify high-quality academic units of significant importance to the college and university where the age distribution of a department could lead to a substantial loss of faculty excellence over the next ten years or so.
   b. Develop multi-year hiring plans for those academic units that emphasize the recruitment of “rising stars” and promising new Ph.D.s, and generally do so in the context of the college’s longer-term plans for faculty sizes across units and for the college as whole.
   c. Create the resources to support these hiring plans through fund-raising, internal reallocation within colleges, and a central fund in the provost’s office to assist colleges by selectively “pre-filling” on future retirements.
   d. Make proactive efforts to ensure that outstanding Cornell faculty are rewarded and supported in ways that reduce their motivation to pursue outside opportunities.
   e. Mitigate the disadvantages of a small, isolated university community with extraordinary dual-career efforts, and leverage the advantages by enriching collaborative intellectual communities among Cornell faculty, staff, and students.

2. Identify a few departments or fields of critical importance to the university and move them into a position of world leadership while working to prevent others from losing such stature.
   a. Ask colleges (deans in consultation with their faculty) to identify departments or programs that are strategically important and on the “cusp” of leadership or on the verge of losing it.
   b. Seek the advice of faculty advisory committees regarding whether or not to invest in the department or unit.
c. Where the answer is in the affirmative, develop a plan for raising the quality and stature (or preventing a decline) of that department or program over the next five years.

d. If necessary, reallocate faculty positions or resources from other departments and programs in order to secure a position of academic leadership for the chosen departments.

3. **Create a culture in support of teaching in every department across campus.**

   a. Inventory policies and procedures used by departments and colleges to support and encourage excellence in teaching. Identify good models on campus.

   b. Ask deans, department chairs, and faculty to assess their policies, procedures and symbolic signals about teaching, using the models identified above as benchmarks (or others they deem more appropriate for a particular discipline or area).

   c. Identify departments and programs for improvements in teaching and provide targeted instructional support designed to foster higher-quality teaching and a stronger teaching culture.

   d. Ensure that there is sufficient, well-integrated support at the center and in colleges to promote excellence in teaching and to develop junior faculty as teachers.

   e. In consultation with faculty, develop indicators (quantitative or qualitative) for assessing progress, appropriate to the discipline, department, or field, and do so in consultation with faculty. Report to the department chair and dean on progress.

   f. Undertake the above measure on a regular basis in order to promote a pattern of continuous improvements in teaching.

   g. Consider the quality of teaching and the strength of the teaching culture as significant factors in the allocation of resources to departments by colleges and to individual faculty by departments.

4. **Create stronger connections or ties across colleges that enhance educational opportunities of students and the quality and stature of disciplines or fields.**

   a. Review the academic necessity and justification for policies and procedures that limit or create obstacles for students in one college or campus who wish to take courses in another.

   b. Make it easier to arrange and sustain joint appointments of faculty across colleges, especially those that strengthen the quality and stature of an academic discipline or area.

   c. Continue to develop new mechanisms of coordination or connectivity in academic areas or disciplines within and across the life sciences and agricultural
sciences, social sciences, humanities and the arts, and physical sciences and engineering.

d. Use internal faculty advisory committees to develop ideas for new synergies across disciplines or disciplinary areas.

5. **Develop and implement strategically focused, cost-effective enhancements to the infrastructure support for research, scholarship, and creativity—including the libraries, shared research facilities, and the administration of research grants.**

   a. Define the relevant indicators or measures for assessing the library infrastructure for scholarship and education, and set a goal of Cornell having a library ranked in the top ten among university libraries in these terms.

   b. Develop a plan with significant faculty involvement to assess the library needs of different disciplines and how best to meet those needs in a cost-effective manner over the next five years.

   c. In recognition of the critical role of shared facilities, locally and nationally/internationally, develop a plan that defines future needs and includes a realistic assessment of funding options and sources.

   d. Strengthen the administration and support for research grants, and consult regularly with faculty and postdocs to track success and solicit suggestions for improvement.

6. **Make significant progress toward greater diversity among faculty, students, and staff.**

   **For Faculty:**

   a. Set explicit targets based on absolute criteria or the pipeline (whichever is greater).

   b. Assess current recruitment policies and practices to determine how they can be changed to generate more diverse candidate pools and to ensure that diversity impact is considered at each step of the recruitment process.

   c. Assign to a person or committee the responsibility for tracking progress and for reporting to the unit chair or college dean.

   d. Ensure that deans hold departments accountable for progress toward their targets and the provost holds deans accountable for progress in their colleges.

   **For Staff:**

   The principles and steps are identical to the above for professional- and management-level positions, given a national market. For other job categories, where markets are local and pools are extremely thin, it is most important to ensure that those in an underrepresented category (e.g., a female painter or male kitchen worker) receive fair consideration.
For Students:

a. Set explicit targets for yearly growth in the proportion of underrepresented minorities among the undergraduate student population, and in the proportion of women and minorities in graduate and professional fields where they are underrepresented.

b. Assess the adequacy of current programs for recruiting minorities and for ensuring a hospitable and supportive environment for minorities on campus.

c. Strengthen programs that support, encourage, and recognize the academic achievements of minority students.

7. Strongly connect public engagement with Cornell’s areas of strength in research, scholarship, and education.

a. Inventory the public engagement components of academic programs, defining these in broad terms (see page 36).

b. Identify a range of models for different academic disciplines, departments, or areas and ask departments and their faculty to consider the value and appropriateness of these models (or others they deem more relevant) for their programs and their students.

c. Develop innovative approaches to public engagement that link the generation of knowledge through research, scholarship, and creativity with the transmission of that knowledge to local communities, the state of New York, the nation, and the world.

d. Determine how best to ensure that there is faculty involvement and leadership in programs involving outreach and public engagement.

e. Enhance opportunities and reduce any bureaucratic obstacles for students to engage in service learning, study abroad, internships, working with local schools, and the like to create a more dynamic interface between the university and the larger world community.

f. Encourage collaboration among departments to develop new, cost-effective ways of sharing knowledge and expertise with the public at large and to connect research with public engagement and education more effectively.
EXCELLENCE IN ORGANIZATIONAL STEWARDSHIP

Introduction: Stewardship refers to processes and structures that manage, allocate, and monitor resources that are crucial to fulfill the university’s academic mission. This section begins with a set of general guidelines and then focuses on three resource areas: budget and finance; capital projects and physical facilities; and information technology. Human resources (faculty and staff) are treated in other sections of this plan. Given the university aspirations proposed by this plan, the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational stewardship will be more important than ever over the next five to ten years in order to generate the resources necessary for the implementation of this plan.

Objective 1: Affirm general guidelines for organizational stewardship.

[Rationale: The university must function in a manner that ensures, on an ongoing basis, that all its operations align with and support its core academic missions. To this end, principles of good stewardship must be understood and followed at all levels of the university. These principles include a commitment to protect and enhance the reputation of the university, an understanding of priorities and responsibilities at an organizational and individual level, an appropriate respect for and use of shared governance and collaborative decision making, and a commitment to open communication and transparency within planning, priority setting, and decision making. All members of the community are stewards of the university, and they should understand their obligations to act in ways that are responsive to the interests and needs of the university.]

Actions:

a. Implement resource allocation strategies that enable and motivate actions that enhance academic excellence.

b. Clearly define and align roles and responsibilities for effective and efficient operations in a decentralized academic environment.

c. Implement cost-effective investments in support systems and infrastructures that meet mission-based needs.

d. Recognize, anticipate, and manage the different types of institutional risk (e.g., operational, compliance, reputational) and promote a university-wide sense of responsibility for these.

e. Align support operations with core academic mission, by maintaining clear priorities, metrics for assessing them, and appropriate internal controls.
f. Support and, where feasible, strengthen informed, collaborative, and transparent decision making.

g. Review current mechanisms of shared governance in light of changes in the responsibilities at the center and in units (administrative and academic).

[Note: See Section III of this plan (see page 14) for a statement of four governance principles related to actions f and g—i.e., shared/collegial, consultative, transparent, and ethical.]

**Objective 2:** Continuous improvement in the stewardship of financial resources.

*Rationale:* Rigorous and effective stewardship of the university’s financial resources is critical to its ability to achieve its core mission. Because of the innate complexity of the university’s budget and finance functions, it is imperative that such processes be open, transparent, and effective in protecting the university’s fiscal health and supporting its central and unit-level institutional priorities. Clear areas of responsibility and lines of authority, along with means to ensure accountability, are needed. Resource flows must be clear and predictable, but there must also be sufficient institutional flexibility to allow the strategic pursuit of important opportunities when they arise. The following are actions that should be undertaken by the appropriate administrators or officers of the university.

**Actions:**

a. Review existing budget models that determine resource flows to units in order to revise, simplify, and align these budget processes and ensure support for central and unit priorities.

b. Seek to simplify or eliminate cross-charging schemes within the university to reduce time and effort tracking funds moving between units and departments.

c. Clarify institutional roles and responsibilities related to budget and finance to facilitate effective collaboration and communication between responsible parties and appropriate monitoring of performance and accountability.

d. Prepare and present operating and capital budgets reflecting complete program and operating costs and sources of funding, and regularly review these to ensure that planned uses of resources do not exceed funds available.

e. Ensure clear and explicit reporting documents for senior leadership and Trustees, including reports on in-year operating budget performance, capital budget sources and uses, short-term lines of credit, the university’s debt portfolio, and a multi-year financial model.

f. Seek to balance the need for purchasing efficiencies through centralization while understanding and allowing for flexibility and individual solutions necessitated by the diverse array of products and services often utilized in units and departments.
g. To the extent appropriate and possible, keep the Faculty Senate and/or the UFC’s Financial Policies Committee informed of major budget issues and make public suitable information regarding the annual capital and operating budgets.

**Objective 3:** Promote effective stewardship of the built and surrounding environment.

*Rationale:* The beauty of Cornell’s natural surroundings and its built environment are a key asset that must be enhanced and preserved. At the same time, its facilities must be allowed to grow and evolve as necessary to support its core mission. Decisions regarding facilities and the physical environment typically involve the complex interplay of multiple factors and interests that must be recognized and addressed in order to steward effectively the university’s physical resources. These decisions should be framed by and consistent with Cornell University’s commitments to sustainability. An integrated planning model should involve the following elements:

**Actions:**

a. Make environmental sustainability a guiding principle in the stewardship of the university’s facilities and resources and in assessments of its impact on the community and region.


c. Ensure effective financial planning, guaranteeing that budget impacts, including ongoing facilities operations and maintenance costs, are known, understood, and agreed upon, and that a specific and approved funding plan is in place, before they are initiated.

d. Optimize existing space use, and use renovation whenever appropriate as an alternative to new construction and expansion.

[Note: Major renovation decisions should seek to avoid creating excess duplicative capacity and whenever possible should seek to support the needs and interests of adjacent units or functions. They should also honor the interior and exterior architectural integrity of the renovated buildings.]

e. Follow the Cornell Master Plan guidelines and requirements, and emphasize the maintenance of openness on central campus, even though there may be short-term cost savings for construction there.

f. Determine optimal use of open building sites by considering the full range of possible unit and university uses.

g. Ensure that resources available for facilities, including SUCF funds, are optimally allocated by a strategic analysis of unit or university priorities.
h. Seek to create campus-wide space utilization that optimizes university and unit priorities, while accounting for the specific legal requirements and ownership issues of contract college buildings.

i. Allocate sufficient funding for maintenance and renewal of existing facilities, and for university projects relating to infrastructure, common and shared facilities, public spaces, natural areas, and the like.

j. Ensure proactive and long-term planning efforts with affected local governments and constituencies to optimize Cornell’s investments, enhance community relations, and leverage local, state, and federal funding.

Objective 4: Provide cost-effective infrastructures for information technology.

[Rationale: As stewards of information technologies (IT) resources and infrastructure, we maintain and renew our IT hardware, software, and the skills of our IT professionals while also balancing budgetary demands, risks, opportunities, and the business and educational needs of our community. Further, the IT infrastructure must ensure that we adequately protect and preserve the university and personal information we maintain.]

Action 1: Coordination of effective and efficient delivery of IT services and infrastructure that support academic and research missions as well as business needs of the university.

   a. Maintain our existing IT services and infrastructure in a financially responsible way.

   b. Implement “best practices” in design, delivery, and maintenance of IT services and infrastructure.

   c. Benchmark services and infrastructure regularly.

   d. Coordinate across campus to assess and prioritize needs and requirements of the academic mission and appropriate business practices.

Action 2: Ensure that information technology services and infrastructure support the access, security, and privacy needs for information stored within the infrastructure as articulated by an appropriate office such as Institutional Research and Planning.

   a. Participate in access, privacy, and archive decisions to ensure objectives can be reasonably met by the IT services and infrastructure.

   b. Implement configurations, components, and practices that support data management decisions.

   c. Enforce data management decisions through technologies and processes.

   d. Delineate clearly the responsibility for IT actions among CIT, unit, and department IT sections and personnel.
Conclusions: Stewardship Priorities

Stewardship along all of the domains covered here is an enabling condition for academic excellence. It is not possible or necessarily even wise to set priorities across these general areas. Instead, the Strategic Planning Advisory Council suggests that within each of these, priority be given to those aspects of stewardship that have the most direct impact on the seven strategic initiatives (see Section V). Effective stewardship is crucial for generating resources to implement those initiatives.
Section VII

CORNELL AT ITS SESQUICENTENNIAL

[To be developed]
Section VIII

ASSESSING PROGRESS
2010–2015

Introduction: This section proposes a general approach and set of assumptions that should guide the development and use of metrics and qualitative indicators for assessing progress on plan goals, objectives, and strategic initiatives. An initial list of core metrics is proposed with the understanding that these would need to be integrated with more qualitative information from regular reviews of departments and programs, from assessments by colleges of their programs, and from departments and programs themselves. (Appendix C includes and expands on this section with a more comprehensive framework for assessment that includes both qualitative and quantitative indicators for each objective.)

A. General Approach

1. Focus on university-wide (aggregated) metrics and qualitative indicators but include, where appropriate, unit-level ones.
2. Organize metrics and qualitative indicators around goals and priorities.
3. Include both quantitative and qualitative indicators.
4. Have multiple indicators for each goal, given the complexity of the assessment, but as few as possible to enhance focus.
5. Make the metrics flexible and adaptable to be useful across a wide range of academic areas or units.
6. Consider the need to minimize the amount of staff time or additional staff to implement the metrics.
7. Insofar as possible, use existing sources of data and information.

B. Assumptions

1. It is exceedingly difficult to develop fully adequate measures of progress toward greater excellence in a research university.
2. No particular metrics or qualitative indicators will be sufficient, but some sets or combinations of them will be significantly better for tracking progress than others or than having none.
3. Metrics and qualitative indicators need to be developed in consultation with those people in the areas being measured (faculty, students, and staff). The metrics developed in this plan, therefore, must be considered a draft for further consultation and development.
4. Metrics help to promote progress and improvement by holding the institution or units accountable for working toward goals or objectives, but they also can do harm if action is focused on moving particular numbers or indicators rather than the larger purposes for which they are created.

5. Any set of metrics will have unintended consequences that are important to analyze and anticipate.

6. Any set of metrics or indicators should be viewed as a whole and be part of an overall qualitative assessment and judgment.

C. Core Metrics

With the above approach and assumptions as context, listed below are a provisional set of core metrics that are important to track over the next five years. These are related to strategic priorities and initiatives in previous sections of this plan. This list should be modified and developed further over time (see Appendix C) with assumptions 4 and 5 above in mind.

- **Faculty and staff compensation**
  Compare salaries and fringe benefits to peer institutions (faculty) or appropriate markets (staff).

- **Amount and nature of faculty hiring and retention**
  Number of hires/year; rank distribution of hires; tracking of changes in faculty size; yearly assessment of faculty exits.

- **Age distribution of the faculty**
  Percent of faculty 55 and above; 60 and above (university-wide and by unit).

- **Diversity of faculty, students, and staff**
  Percent women and underrepresented minorities.
  For faculty, comparison to targets of 20% or pipeline percent (whichever is higher).
  Set comparable targets for students and staff.

- **Number of top-ranked departments and programs**
  Select appropriate NRC criteria; discipline-specific rankings; regular program reviews.

- **Sponsored research**
  Sponsored research (total expenditures; expenditures per faculty member).

- **Student learning outcomes**
College assessments of learning outcomes based on core competencies (see Appendix B).

- **Student access**
  Cost of Cornell education by family income quintile.

- **Senior student surveys**
  Satisfaction with teaching; perceptions of international and public engagement opportunities, ease of taking courses across boundaries, or administrative/bureaucratic barriers; perceptions of living-learning environment at Cornell.

- **Library rankings**
  Compare to research university libraries, using appropriate measures from the ARL (Association of Research Libraries).

- **Faculty and staff surveys**
  Conduct surveys on a regular schedule.

- **Ithaca-Weill interactions**
  Joint research grants; collaborative teaching programs; and cross-usage of core facilities.

- **Institutional reputation**
  Select reputational rankings of research universities.
APPENDICES
Appendix A

CORNELL’S STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

Open Doors, Open Hearts, and Open Minds

CORNELL’S STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

Open Doors
“I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study.” This statement, made by Ezra Cornell in 1865, proclaims Cornell University’s enduring commitment to inclusion and opportunity, which is rooted in the shared democratic values envisioned by its founders. We honor this legacy of diversity and inclusion and welcome all individuals, including those from groups that have been historically marginalized and previously excluded from equal access to opportunity.

Open Hearts
Cornell’s mission is to foster personal discovery and growth, nurture scholarship and creativity across a broad range of common knowledge, and affirm the value to individuals and society of the cultivation of the human mind and spirit. Our legacy is reflected in the diverse composition of our community, the breadth of our curriculum, the strength of our public service, and the depth of our commitment to freedom, equity, and reason. Each member of the Cornell community has a responsibility to honor this legacy and to support a more diverse and inclusive campus in which to work, study, teach, research, and serve.

Open Minds
Free expression is essential to this mission, and provocative ideas lawfully presented are an expected result. An enlightened academic community, however, connects freedom with responsibility. Cornell stands for civil discourse, reasoned thought, sustained discussion, and constructive engagement without degrading, abusing, harassing, or silencing others. Cornell is committed to act responsibly and forthrightly to maintain an environment that opens doors, opens hearts, and opens minds.
Appendix B

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
http://www.cornell.edu/provost/assessment/

A. Purpose

In fall 2009 the provost and vice provost for undergraduate education formed a Core Assessment Committee to develop mechanisms for assessing the outcomes of educational programs, in particular the impact on students. To accomplish this, the committee pulled together “assessment agents” designated by each college. The educational goals and competencies that were first developed in each college became the basis for the competencies defined below.

B. Draft Core Competencies for Cornell Students

1. **Courses of study at Cornell should generate proficiency in the following core academic competencies:**
   a. **Disciplinary Knowledge:** demonstrate a systematic or coherent understanding of an academic field of study.
   b. **Critical Thinking:** apply analytic thought to a body of knowledge; evaluate arguments, identifying relevant assumptions or implications; formulate coherent arguments.
   c. **Communication Skills:** express ideas clearly in writing; speak articulately; communicate with others using media as appropriate; work effectively with others.
   d. **Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning:** demonstrate the ability to understand cause-and-effect relationships; define problems; use symbolic thought; apply scientific principles; solve problems with no single correct answer.
   e. **Self-Directed Learning:** work independently; identify appropriate resources; take initiative; manage a project through to completion.
   f. **Information Literacy:** access, evaluate, and use a variety of relevant information sources.
   g. **Engagement in the Process of Discovery or Creation:** demonstrate the ability to work productively in a laboratory setting, studio, or field environment.

2. **In addition, the Cornell environment strives to foster collegiality, civility, and responsible stewardship. Through academic studies and broader experiences on and off campus, Cornell graduates should attain proficiency in the following:**
   a. **Multicultural Competence:** have knowledge of the values and beliefs of multiple cultures; effectively engage in a multicultural society; interact respectfully with diverse others; develop a global perspective.
b. *Moral and Ethical Awareness*: embrace moral/ethical values in conducting one’s life; formulate a position/argument about an ethical issue from multiple perspectives; use ethical practices in all work.

c. *Self-Management*: care for one’s self responsibly; demonstrate awareness of one’s self in relation to others.

d. *Community Engagement*: demonstrate responsible behavior; engage in the intellectual life of the university outside the classroom; participate in community and civic affairs.

C. **Assessment Implementation Plan and Benchmarks**

**Stage 1–Initial Implementation**

Timing: by May 5, 2010

- Each college establishes an assessment process (utilizing standing committees, e.g., curriculum committees or educational policy committees, or setting up a new committee).
- Each college surveys already-existing assessment activities (including those generated by external review requirements and those conceived within ongoing program and course conceptions), in order to incorporate these into the college process.
- Each college generates an educational goals/outcomes statement for the college.
- These statements are added to a specifically designated assessment site on the college website.
- Each college targets 2–3 majors or programs for which an assessment plan will be generated and incorporated into curricular materials. These should be stable programs, ideally representing a range of fields/areas.
- For each major/program, 2–3 program goals should be provided and learning outcomes should be collected, using both direct and indirect measures (at least 2 measures per major/program).
- Statements of these goals/outcomes should be posted on the college website and on other sites (to be determined).
- These activities of the colleges are coordinated and facilitated by the Core Assessment Committee.

**Stage 2–Full Implementation**

Timing: by May 5, 2011

- College assessment sites are maintained and expanded to include department and program goals.
- Each college continues the process of generating assessment plans for the majority of its majors/programs, with this process to be completed by the end of spring 2011.
• Progress is reviewed; process is revised as necessary; further need for resources is reviewed; wider inclusion of the campus is reviewed.

• The Core Assessment Committee becomes a standing committee, overseen by the provost’s office, tasked with coordinating and facilitating college assessment processes.

Stage 3–Institutionalization

Timing: by May 2015

• College committees with designated responsibility regularly review educational goals, according to a timetable.

• Colleges maintain and update their assessment web sites regularly (according to a timetable designated within each college).

• Departments/programs review their assessment outcomes (according to a regular process established internally).

• New programs are included in the assessment process (according to the established process within each college).

• The Core Assessment Committee facilitates the assessment process, identifies needs as they arise, addresses challenges, and provides an annual report to the provost.
Appendix C

ASSESSMENTS OF PROGRESS TOWARD OBJECTIVES

Draft Framework

I. Introduction

The Strategic Planning Advisory Council is offering this broad framework for using existing data or institutional capacities to assess and track progress on plan objectives. This proposal is a first step, intended to be a starting point from which appropriate groups of administrators, faculty, and staff can develop and refine a set of metrics and qualitative indicators. The general approach and assumptions are as follows:

A. General Approach:

1. Focus on university-wide (aggregated) metrics and qualitative indicators but include, where appropriate, unit-level ones.
2. Organize metrics and qualitative indicators around goals and priorities.
3. Include both quantitative and qualitative indicators.
4. Have multiple indicators for each goal, given the complexity of the assessment, but as few as possible to enhance focus.
5. Make the metrics flexible and adaptable to be useful across a wide range of academic areas or units.
6. Consider the need to minimize the amount of staff time or additional staff to implement the metrics.
7. Insofar as possible, use existing sources of data and information.

B. Assumptions:

1. It is exceedingly difficult to develop fully adequate measures of progress toward greater excellence in a research university.
2. No particular metrics or qualitative indicators will be sufficient, but some sets or combinations of them will be significantly better for tracking progress than others or than having none.
3. Metrics and qualitative indicators need to be developed in consultation with those people in the areas being measured (faculty, students, and staff). The metrics developed in this plan, therefore, must be considered a draft for further consultation and development.
4. Metrics help to promote progress and improvement by holding the institution or units accountable for working toward goals or objectives, but they also can do harm if action is focused on moving particular numbers or indicators rather than the larger purposes for which they are created.
5. Any set of metrics will have unintended consequences that are important to analyze and anticipate.
6. Any set of metrics or indicators should be viewed as a whole and be part of an overall qualitative assessment and judgment.

With the above approach and these assumptions in mind, the following pages list a range of possible metrics or qualitative indicators for each objective in the plan.

II. Institutional Reputation and Stature

1. Select reputational rankings of research universities.
2. Aggregate data on the university and academic units (e.g., indicators of faculty excellence, student quality, and excellence of research, scholarship, and creativity).
3. Choose a set of metrics from forthcoming National Research Council evaluations to track institutional progress toward the university’s aspiration.

III. Faculty Excellence

Faculty Recruiting and Size (Objective 1)

1. Amount and nature of faculty hiring.
2. Have there been pre-fills where future faculty quality warrants it?
3. Funding for new faculty positions in strategically important departments or programs (from fund-raising, internal reallocation, or other sources).
4. Has Cornell’s dual-career program expanded the window for commitments beyond three years? Are there new elements that distinguish Cornell from its competition?

Faculty Diversity (Objective 2)

1. Comparison of proportion of women in departments to a 20% absolute standard or the pipeline level (whichever is higher), with the federal standard as a reference. This extends the CU ADVANCE standard across departments and colleges.
2. Comparison of the proportion of underrepresented minorities to the appropriate pipeline and federal standards. Develop an absolute standard that serves the same purpose as the CU ADVANCE standard for women in science.
3. How many departments have reached the 20% or pipeline targets for women and underrepresented minorities? How many have reached the federal standards?
4. Have funding mechanisms to promote diversity improved?
5. Is there an efficient and effective monitoring mechanism in place for each hiring unit?

Competitive Faculty and Staff Compensation (Objective 3)

1. Define peer groups appropriate to given disciplines, fields, departments, professional schools, and staff job categories.
2. Track faculty and staff salaries and fringe benefits against appropriate peer institutions.
Faculty Retention (Objective 4)

1. Have efforts to prevent exits by highly valued faculty increased?
2. A qualitative assessment each year of cases in which highly valued faculty have left (to determine how responses can be improved).
3. Have dual-career and work-life issues (e.g., childcare) been given appropriate attention in retention efforts?
4. Track percent of faculty exits per year across faculty career stages (pre-tenure, tenure to mid-career, and more senior).

Rewarding Outstanding Faculty (Objective 5)

1. Have new forms of recognition and reward for outstanding performance among faculty (in teaching, research, and public engagement) been implemented in departments and colleges?
2. Faculty awards and honors; leadership positions in field.
3. Number of faculty in distinguished national academies (e.g., the National Academy of Sciences).
4. Do all departments have systems for reviewing the teaching, research, and public engagement of faculty after tenure?

Intellectual Environment (Objective 6)

1. What new cross-college or cross-department interdisciplinary collaborations have formed? What is the potential impact of these?
2. Has a sustainable “faculty club” been developed and/or other measures to promote informal conversation and dialogue?
3. Have concerted efforts been made to improve or maintain a strong culture of collaboration in departments? Have these efforts had an impact?

IV. Excellence in Education

Shared Educational Student Experience (Objective 1)

1. Have academic or administrative barriers to students in one college taking courses in another been reduced?
2. Have additional shared educational components for Cornell undergraduates (living-learning programs, courses, and so forth) that address core competencies been added? What impact have these had?
3. Have course or credit hours out-of-college for Cornell undergraduates increased?
4. Senior survey results on perceptions of ease of access or taking courses outside of their department or college.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Have colleges specified core competencies?
2. Are mechanisms for measuring learning outcomes, indicated by these core competencies, in place?
   (See Appendix B.)
International and Public Engagement Opportunities for Students (Objective 2 in education and Objective 5 in public engagement section)

1. Student participation rates (for credit and noncredit).
2. Are more programs offering public engagement opportunities to students under faculty supervision and leadership?
3. Have costs to students for study abroad decreased? Have administrative obstacles been reduced for international and public engagement experiences?
4. Have we examined and affirmed the quality of current international and public engagement options for students?
5. Student survey data about these experiences.

Culture in Support of Teaching (Objective 3)

1. Develop Cornell benchmarks for rigorous assessment, by identifying good models within Cornell, and use these to compare departments’ attention to and support for teaching excellence.
2. Have forms or ways to recognize excellence in teaching increased?
3. Student survey data on teaching environment.
4. Per capita credit hours (or courses) taught by senior faculty (full professors).

Supporting Pedagogical Innovation (Objective 4)

1. Usage rate of technological support.
2. Increase in number of teaching projects supported by the Office of the Provost.
3. Has team teaching across colleges or disciplines increased?

Undergraduate Student Quality and Diversity (Objective 5)

2. Competitive position of financial award packages.
3. Acceptance rate, retention rate.
5. Has the percent of underrepresented minorities in each entering class grown? Has it reached 20% or greater?
6. Quality of URM educational experience: percent of URMs who are deans’ scholars or whose GPA is in the upper quartile.
7. Senior student survey data on minority experience and perceived educational benefits from a diverse community.
8. Student survey data on perceptions of academic and personal dimensions of student life at Cornell.

Graduate Student Diversity and Quality (Objective 6)

2. Competitive position of stipend and benefit levels.
3. Have graduate fields been reduced in number or consolidated?
4. Do more fields have teaching components in their graduate programs?
5. Have fellowships for entering graduate students increased?
6. Quality of job placements (graduate and professional students).
7. Has the percentage of women in graduate fields or professional programs reached the pipeline or 20% (whichever is higher)? Has the percentage of underrepresented minorities reached the pipeline, 20%, or the federal standard (whichever is higher)?

V. Research, Scholarship, and Creativity

Leadership Position/Department or Program Stature (Objectives 1 and 2)

1. Have dimensions for comparing departments to peers been defined, and are they being used by departments and colleges to track changes?
2. Number and quality of faculty publications, appropriate to discipline or field (e.g., citation data, journal publications, book publications, qualitative assessments).
5. Metrics on grant support (where appropriate), e.g., percent of faculty who are PIs on external grants; total sponsored research per FTE faculty; proposals submitted/successful, etc.

Support for Interdisciplinary Initiatives (Objective 3)

1. Inventory new interdisciplinary initiatives emerging from the faculty, how they were nurtured, and the impact to date (actual or potential).
2. Annual review of faculty search results, assessing cross-departmental and cross-disciplinary impact.
3. Have academic units reviewed tenure and promotion policies to determine if interdisciplinary work of untenured faculty is evaluated in appropriate and effective ways?
4. Assess the success of seed funding programs on a regular basis.

Administration and Support for Research Grants (Objective 4)

Central and Units:
1. Administrative and support services: annual customer satisfaction surveys—both centrally (OSP, ORIA, SFA) and at unit level.
2. Ratio of cost of research administration to sponsored funding (expenditures).
3. Number of proposals submitted per research administrator.

Central:
1. OSP—average number of days to execute awards by sponsor category.
2. ORIA (IACUC, IRB, IBC)—average number of days to review protocols.

Units:
1. Quality of quarterly financial management reports.
2. Number of proposals submitted error-free.
3. Number and dollar value of awards per unit research administrator.
4. Number of overdue sponsor reports.
[Any metrics for improving the administration of external research grants need to be vetted by “focus group” discussions with faculty PI’s and administrators.]

University Library (Objective 5A)

1. Annually publish the library’s acquisition budget by area of research and scholarship.
2. Publish comparisons of Cornell’s standing to other major research universities with respect to collections, subscriptions, etc.

[Focus groups on library services every year or two with faculty and students from different disciplinary groupings.]

Shared Research Facilities (Objective 5B)

1. Report annually on each university-supported shared research facility—number of users served, user fees generated, and the dollar amount of externally funded research enabled by the shared facility.
2. Yearly number (and amount) of instrumentation grants submitted for and by the shared facilities, and the success rate.

Ithaca-Weill Collaborations (Objective 6)

1. Have new synergies or collaborations developed between faculty and graduate students on the Cornell campus in Ithaca and faculty and graduate students at Weill Cornell Medical College and Graduate School? Joint research grants? Collaborative teaching programs? Cross-usage of core facilities?
2. Has there been improvement in administrative issues or barriers? Is it easier for graduate students to take courses at both locations?

VI. Excellence in Public Engagement

Note: For public engagement, the appropriate metrics and indicators should come from the proposed university-wide assessment of public engagement programs and activities. The action items within each objective suggest some things to consider tracking in the interim. For example:

Unified Concept (Objective 1)

1. Has there been an increase in the use of electronic media and the internet to deliver public engagement (including extension) programs?
2. Have new innovative connections among disparate outreach or public engagement programs been developed? What impact have these had?

Evaluation and Research Foundation (Objective 2 and 3)

1. Have new or deeper ties to research been developed?

Partnerships with Stakeholders (Objective 4)

1. Have new partnerships with stakeholders been developed or existing ones strengthened?
2. Data on technology transfer (patents, licensing).
3. Have we capitalized on Cornell’s base in New York City in new ways?


Concluding Comment

This framework is provisional. There are many objectives in this strategic plan. While we do believe the institution should move on all of these fronts, some objectives are more important than others, and progress on some is easier to track than on others. Some may receive greater priority now and others be deferred for later. This appendix does not distinguish among the most and least important but does offer methods for tracking the university’s movement along them. The purpose is to provide a general framework for the implementation stage of the university strategic plan.