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1. Introduction
   a. In this ad hoc Report, Idaho State University (ISU) is responding to Recommendations #3 & #4 as identified in and requested by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and University’s Fall 2014 Year Seven Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Report dated January 26, 2016.
   b. Since the 2014 evaluation, ISU has focused its efforts to align its planning processes and identify methods of successfully assessing student learning outcomes University-wide. This report captures only a handful of those efforts. Additionally, it demonstrates how changes by the senior administration is operationalizing the new processes and ideas, which have fundamentally changed the University’s decision-making system and increased the involvement of the faculty, staff, students and community members.

2. Recommendation #3.
   Recommendation #3: The evaluation committee recommends that the institution integrates all campus plans into a comprehensive planning process (Standard 3.A.1).
   (1) Overview.
      (a) Idaho State University has established a purposeful, integrated, and comprehensive planning system to achieve efforts that supports its mission fulfillment and its strategic plan. The senior administration has created multiple internal organizations, policies, and processes throughout the academic and non-academic structure to accomplish alignment.
   (2) Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Council.
      (a) The most significant step toward accomplishing the goal of aligning ISU’s plans and planning processes was its creation of the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Council (IEAC). Unlike the previous planning system that was consisted of silos, the development of the IEAC transformed ISU because plans are created utilizing various subgroups then those plans are elevated through the Steering Committee for discussion, approval or forwarded to the president with a recommendation. This ensures the alignment campus planning efforts. The IEAC serves as a coordinated, sustainable system to pursue institutional assessment and effectiveness.
      (b) Additionally, the composition of the IEAC structure was designed to include senior administrators, faculty, a Faculty Senate co-chair, staff, the Staff Council president, and student representation so there is an increase in collaboration, inclusion, and transparency. It consists of a Steering Committee, eight subcommittees, and the Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG).
      (c) Its primary functions are to:
         i. provide the organizational framework for integrating institutional effectiveness into the fabric of the university.
         ii. provide integrative and coordinated academic, facilities, technology, and financial planning and implementation.
         iii. reduce redundancy and increase efficiency, transparency, and accountability among mission fulfillment, strategic planning, institutional management, university accreditation, state and federal reporting requirements.
         iv. optimize data and reports system wide.
v. develop an assessment plans that support the implementation of the strategic plan and mission fulfillment.
vi. enhance consistent and coordinated communication between schools, colleges, departments and administration regarding assessment and institutional effectiveness.
vi. provide a forum to share best practices, and generate ideas for process improvement.
vi. incorporate into the decision-making process a number of planning organizations.

Figure 3.1. IEAC Steering and Subcommittees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IEAC Organization</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Duty Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
<td>Dr. Laura Woodworth-Ney</td>
<td>Executive Vice President &amp; Provost (EVPP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Theme 1 Subcommittee</td>
<td>Dr. Cornelis Van der Schyf</td>
<td>Vice President of Research/Dean of the Graduate School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Theme 2 Subcommittee</td>
<td>Dr. Patricia Terrell</td>
<td>Vice President of Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Theme 3 Subcommittee</td>
<td>Dr. Rex Force</td>
<td>Vice President of the Kasiska Division of Health Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Theme 4 Subcommittee</td>
<td>Dr. Kent Tingey</td>
<td>Vice President of Advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Subcommittee</td>
<td>Mr. Brian Hickenlooper</td>
<td>Chief Financial Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities Subcommittee</td>
<td>Ms. Cheryl Hanson</td>
<td>Associate Vice President of Facilities Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology Subcommittee</td>
<td>Mr. Randy Gaines</td>
<td>Chief Information Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation, Assessment, and Academic Program Review Subcommittee</td>
<td>Ms. Selena Grace</td>
<td>Vice Provost for Academic Strategy and Institutional Effectiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.1. IEAC Steering and Subcommittees. ISU’s IEAC is composed of a Steering Committee and eight subcommittees guide the University’s planning requirements.

(d) The Steering Committee meets at a minimum of once a month during the regular school year and sometimes more as required. Each of the subcommittees have their own meetings as needed but assemble at least one time a year.
(e) In many ways, the IEAC is still evolving and defining the roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee and subcommittees, but over the past two years the achievements of the groups have made significant momentum to fully aligning ISU’s planning efforts.
(a) Idaho State University has worked diligently over the last 18 months to define the differences between achieving mission fulfillment and its strategic planning goals. After providing multiple training sessions and having discussions at all levels throughout the University, there is a sense of clarity emerging between the two.
In the past, ISU’s core themes have served as the base of the strategic plan. To assist in differentiating between mission fulfillment and the strategic plan, ISU completed a new, comprehensive five-year plan with five goals that are unique and singular in nature and stand on their own. Each of the new strategic objectives align with the core themes to support achieving mission fulfillment, but they address specific shortfalls that ISU needs to accomplish.

By clearly defining the difference between mission fulfillment and the strategic goals, the IEAC Steering and subcommittees are effectively aligning the outcomes of their planning endeavors, directing resources appropriately, and are focused on achieving operational, strategic, or visionary goals that shape ISU’s future.

Program Prioritization (Expand upon and include examples in the appendix)

Idaho State University has transitioned its Program Prioritization Process into an annual Program Assessment/Program Health process that supports growth and demonstrates need for increased, reallocated, or new resources. Academic Affairs completes an annual review of all programs that is primarily outcomes based using the program prioritization metrics and dashboard. Included in this process is a review of each college’s three-year employee hiring plan, as well as ensuring program goals align with the strategic plan and mission fulfillment objectives.

This process begins in Academic Affairs and then folds into the institutional planning processes through the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Council (IEAC), which is responsible for overseeing the University planning process, coordinating and assessing strategic directions, ensuring that the University meets NWCCU accreditation standards, and implementing the University’s strategic planning agenda.

When evaluating full degree programs and certificates, Academic Affairs has determined that programs will be flagged and must prepare an appropriate plan to address low enrollment if they have a five-year average number of graduates

- ≤5 at the associate and certificate level
- ≤10 at the undergraduate level
- ≤5 at the master’s level
- ≤3 at the doctoral level

When programs fail to demonstrate progress towards, or meet the minimum thresholds, they are required to develop a plan that must address program needs and sustainability, as well as identify if the program should be restructured, consolidated, or closed. The academic unit is expected to monitor these numbers annually and keep Academic Affairs apprised of declines or failure to show progress towards meeting the goals.

Examples of Aligning Planning.

(a) New Budget Process
In 2017, ISU’s Administration transitioned away from the University’s existing budget model and began implementing a new budget process that utilizes the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Council’s (IEAC) Steering Committee as the executive budget council to the President. Unlike the previous budget committee, the IEAC is composed of executive administrators, staff, faculty, Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and student representation. This committee is more diverse regarding each person’s level of understanding and responsibility regarding the budget, and as a result, that lent itself to more discussion within the group on key elements of the budget and a greater depth in explanation. At the end of the IEAC’s part of the process, the group unanimously approved the budget recommendation.

The new process lent itself to other significant changes. In previous years, the Vice President for Finance and Administration allocated funding based on the previous year’s allotment. For the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) budget, both the academic and non-academic units received funding targets from the EVPP at the beginning of the budget cycle that aligned with accreditation requirements, the strategic plan’s priorities, the mission fulfillment objectives, and the Idaho Legislature’s requirement to attain a balanced budget.

Also under the new model, Academic and non-academic units’ leadership received significantly more freedom to determine how they would allocate their proposed funding and thusly where they would adjust spending. They balanced their operational needs against personnel requirements.

As a means of increasing transparency and inclusion, this was also the first year that the EVPP, the Vice Provost for Academic Strategies and Institutional Effectiveness and, and the new Chief Financial Officer presented a proposed academic budget to the Faculty Senate for their review and feedback.

Implementing a new budget model is complicated, but it was made even more difficult for those involved when it came to developing FY18’s budget. ISU is experiencing a significant drop in international enrollment over the past year because of the economic strains felt by multiple Middle Eastern countries. In FY18, ISU is expecting to have approximately a $9 million tuition shortfall.

ISU’s leaders at all levels came together throughout the process to identify areas within their areas of responsibility where they could reduce expenditures or generate income. As a result, the IEAC proposed to President Vailas a budget cut of approximately $6.3 million, an increase in income of approximately $1 million, and to use approximately $2 million of its reserve fund to cover the difference.

In June 2017, the State Board of Education (SBOE) approved ISU’s FY18 budget. While further refinements will occur to the process this fall, the changes already undertaken proved that the University could align the distribution of funding to academic and non-academic units based on program prioritization, strategic initiatives and mission fulfillment activities. The new process broke down the silos not only between the units but also within the process itself. Finally, by making the
IEAC Steering Committee the executive level budget council, the level of participation and diversity in the process increased significantly, as did the level of transparency when the CFO presented the academic budget to the Faculty Senate.

Figure 3.2. ISU’s Newly Adopted Budget Process

(b) Facilities and Information Technology

i. As an example of increased efficiency and alignment occurring at ISU in FY17, the IEAC Steering Committee implemented two new processes to support aligning the budget planning process more closely with the strategic plan and mission fulfillment.

ii. Facilities and Information Technology Services (ITS) requested that units complete and submit a rubric with new project requests. The rubric scores are tied to the strategic goals and core theme objectives as well as accreditation, administrative, and legal requirements. Committees consisting
of mid-level administrators and faculty members reviewed then ranked the projects by the rubric score, thus prioritizing them. Upon completion, the committees provided them back to Facilities and ITS who evaluated the cost of the prioritized projects against their designated budgets to determine how many of the units’ projects they could accomplish given their current funding levels. Facilities and ITS then submitted their recommendations to the IEAC Steering Committee. The IEAC Steering Committee reviewed the prioritization and were provided three choices. 1. The Steering Committee could request the President reprioritize funds from another area of the University to cover unfunded projects; 2. reprioritize the projects based on operational requirements; or 3. approve the existing prioritized lists. In 2017, the IEAC approved the prioritized list as submitted.

iii. This process has worked well for both Facilities and ITS. They will reevaluate the process in August to determine if any changes to the rubric or the prioritization process need to occur. One change already underway is the creation of a supporting document to better describe the project. This became apparent during the evaluation process. Both units had to seek information from the requesting organizations in order to evaluate the time and funding requirements.

iv. This process resulted in two significant outcomes. First, it gives ISU’s leadership a clear understanding of what projects will and will not be funded in the upcoming fiscal year. If a project is important to the University’s success and falls below the funding line, then the decision-makers can manage the distribution of funds more effectively. Second, it provides predictability to the units submitting the requests. Units can see where their project falls on the funded list so they can plan accordingly.

(6) Conclusion. ISU takes great pride in the system it has created to align planning throughout the University. The leadership can state with certainty that the University has made significant strides and efforts to establish a planning system that uses the IEAC Steering and Subcommittees for planning development and oversight; that there are tools in place to ensure alignment of the plan strategic plan and mission fulfillment criteria; and that the plans that the IEAC approve are aligned with the budget process. As a result of this system, the level of inclusion and transparency continues to grow and flourish.


The evaluation committee recommends that the institution continue to work to clarify the ways in which it will use assessment results to inform and strengthen programs and services, and to demonstrate institutional improvement, mission fulfillment, and sustainability (Standards 4.A, 4.B, 5.A and 5.B.)

(1) ISU’s Academic Assessment Program.
   (a) GERC
   (b) Specialized Accreditation
(c) University Wide-Standardized Assessment Program
(2) ISU’s Non-academic Assessment Program.
(a) Standards and Evaluation Process
(i) 
i. Non-academic Assessment at Work: Student Affairs

(j) Conclusion.

The