

Water Institute Faculty Advisory Council Meeting – Summary

June 5, 2007, 3:00 – 5:00 PM

Attended by: WI FAC members: Jim Jones, Dorota Haman, Peter Sheng, Jim Jawitz, Richard Hamann, Sandy Berg, Suresh Rao (invited guest); WI Staff: Wendy Graham, Mark Newman, Kathleen McKee (not able to participate entire time), Lisette Staal (facilitated)

Topic: Review the Strategic Plan and provide feedback

Objectives: By the end of this meeting we hope to have:

1. Determined if there is general agreement with the Strategic Plan (mission, vision, goals and objectives) and clarify what, if any, changes are needed to prepare the Strategic Plan document for external review.
2. Suggested how the Strategic Plan can be a useful and dynamic tool to get the Water Institute where we want it to be.
3. Identified any gaps in the planned activities designed to achieve our objectives
4. Discussed what metrics should be used to measure our success and how should they be addressed in the Strategic plan.

Summary of Discussion:

1. Why does the Water Institute we need a strategic plan and how can it be a useful and dynamic tool?

The participants were asked to think about the question stated above and to write their answers down individually. In particular, they were asked to consider: *Why it is needed? Who needs it? How it can be useful?*

Why it is needed?

- ✓ To define consensus
- ✓ Help understand how we approach and outline issues that WI will address and how.
- ✓ Establish priorities and goals
- ✓ Focus on key issues, priorities
- ✓ Get buy-in from stakeholders
- ✓ Project an appropriate image and provide talking points
- ✓ Answer why someone should be interested in The Water Institute
- ✓ Allow for some continuity and sustainability
- ✓ To be able to evaluate performance and direction
- ✓ Articulate the success of the Water Institute reaching appropriate goals

The importance of the process to arrive at the above was noted as equally, if not more important than the final written document. In particular, when considering the written

document, it needs to be clear who the AUDIENCE is for the document. Several comments made noted that the WI Strategic Plan as it is currently written is more of an internal working document – more like a work plan. Although this is an important product, it is not appropriate for an external audience as it is currently written .

Who needs it?

- ✓ Internal
 - UF Administration
 - Director and Staff of the Water Institute
 - Water Institute Affiliate Faculty

- ✓ External
 - Funders - public and private
 - Stakeholders who we serve

How it can be useful?

The comments made during this part of the discussion noted that the use clearly depended on the AUDIENCE of the document and varied for both the internal and external groups noted above.

- ✓ Internal

The strategic plan contributes significantly to the development of a detailed work plan as a management tool to help prioritize, organize and track the work of the Water Institute. In addition, it provides a clear way to report successes and articulate ongoing needs.

- ✓ External

The strategic plan can provide a basis for a process, consensus, networking and improved communication with the stakeholders. It should be dynamic and allow the WI to revisit the goals over time.

2. Is their general agreement on the Mission, Vision, Goals, Objectives?

The FAC members met in small groups (WI staff also participated in groups) to briefly discuss the mission, Vision, Goals and Objectives. By looking in detail at the current strategic plan, the groups considered among other things the balance between the dream and reality, whether it had an internal /or external focus, appropriate detail, language and format. General conclusions on each section are noted below. Wendy and Mark Newman also have some specific editing /notes from within the groups that would be useful in any redrafting.

Mission: FAC suggestions included

- First sentence should include interdisciplinary.
- More “zing” is needed to hook the audience. It should be short and catchy.

- ☑ Should clarify that there is an emphasis on Florida, and included that it is not limited – rather that the scope is Florida, National and beyond.
- ☑ The Last sentence of the Introduction was suggested as a good mission statement. However, there was some concern voiced about the use of the word “solve.”
- ☑ Suggested moving the “Bullets in the mission statement to be Goals.

Vision: FAC suggestions included

- ☑ Needs to be shorter – with impact
- ☑ Tout the grandness of the Water Institute – the best water researchers
- ☑ Go beyond recognition by those we serve and go further to say what we are doing.
- ☑ Emphasize WI capabilities to address issues that Florida and other states face
- ☑ Influencing society..... dealing with water issues
- ☑ Mention academic
- ☑ Not interdisciplinary “issues” rather using interdisciplinary knowledge to address complex issues
- ☑ Second sentence might be enough

Goals: FAC suggestions included

- ☑ Use the bullets under mission as goals – they reflect the broader goals than the current ones.
- ☑ The current thrust areas should be included under goals.
- ☑ The four existing goals will then become objectives
- ☑ The existing objectives are more detailed and within actions and work plan.
- ☑ Consider identifying and articulating the goals as short term and long term.
- ☑ Could try to prioritize by level of effort?
- ☑ Current goals are missing an internal assessment/ noted that this is more a part of the work plan and the new objectives/activities in a workplan should include an internal assessment

What else is missing from the Strategic Planning document?

- Need at very brief (perhaps two pages snappy statement)
- Articulate specifically what the WI is going to work on
- Share the Thrust Areas and major issues being addressed by the Water Institute
- Ways to manage/understand expectations
- Specific Management plan would be longer and appended to the shorter brief.
- For outsider audience the strategic plan
 - Needs to be short
 - Needs to clearly identify what WI is
 - Needs to share what WI does
 - Provide tangible reports of outputs
 - Market what you provide that the external audience wants
- For internal audience the strategic plan needs
 - To address ways to build faculty engagement
 - Articulate for faculty how WI helps them reach their goals

- Expand believers
- Create a culture of engagement
- Provide a framework for assessment and **reward/recognition**

4. What metrics should be used to measure the Water Institute's success and how should they be addressed in the Strategic plan?

Although, due to lack of time we were not able to discuss this question in much detail, all agreed that finding and establishing true measures is important. Some measures for monitoring the success of the WI mentioned by the FAC included tracking and reporting funding, publications, citations, highly visible projects, technologies, policies, benchmark models for success. A couple of mechanisms mentioned were surveys, website hits...

ACTIONS:

1. Water Institute to revise Strategic plan and work plan based on FAC discussion comments.
2. Circulate revised strategic plan to FAC.