

I. B. Plan Development and Organization:

Some of its recommendations of this Plan have their origin in a self-study prepared for the Middle States Association reaccreditation review completed in the Spring of 2007. Others came out of a summer, 2006 retreat with President Mote, vice presidents, and deans, whose goal was “to prime our thinking on big, probably new, strategic initiatives that can set the directions for the campus over the next five to ten years.” An outcome of the retreat was the four “major initiatives” incorporated above and detailed in what follows.

In July, 2007, Nariman Farvardin began his term as Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and took on the responsibility for leading a strategic planning process to be completed during the Spring term of 2008. Partnering with the University Senate, Provost Farvardin assembled a broad based Steering Committee to oversee the task. Additional committees were formed to address the four major initiatives. The wider community of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of the institution was asked for its concerns and advice in fifteen specific areas and over 700 individuals responded with a total of over 6500 free form comments. Steering Committee members were struck by the cogency and the passion of the comments received. Plan details relate and respond to most of the issues raised.

This Strategic Plan is driven by an ambitious vision of what the University will be within ten years time. It begins with a statement of this vision, its reflection in the major elements of our mission, and an expression of the values that will underlie its accomplishment. This is followed by a brief discussion of where the University stands today, including a status report on the goals and achievements of the previous plan, a summary of recommendations coming out of the Middle States process, and an analysis of current strengths, opportunities, challenges, and threats.

The heart of the Plan describes specific institutional goals and the strategies chosen to achieve them. These relate first of all to the Strategic Priorities defined by the major elements of our mission: Undergraduate and Graduate Education; Research, Scholarship, and the Creative and Performing Arts; and Outreach, Partnerships, and Community Engagement. Essential to achieving our vision for each of these priorities are the bold goals and innovative strategies that will create dramatic changes through the four defined Major Initiatives: General Education, Graduate Education, International Programs, and the University’s Surrounding Community. Furthermore, moving the institution forward will require that the needed physical, personnel, and organizational resources be in place. Goals and strategies for addressing these Critical Enablers, are in sections concerning Faculty and Staff, Infrastructure and Academic Support, Resource Allocation and Administrative Efficiency, and External Relations, Development, and Communication.

The Plan as developed calls for bold action and hard decisions. The final section describes the loci of responsibility and the process that has been put in place to assure that these decisions are made and actions completed in a timely fashion.