



Advancing a Vision That Leads to Action

March 2008

Draft Document

In March of 2007 the Governing Board and Assembly Leadership of ACPA began the process of developing a strategic plan for the Association that would guide us for the next five years. The themes of this plan are:

- *Knowledge and Competencies:* The creation and dissemination of new research, theoretical understandings and competencies that will promote intentional practice in student affairs.
- *Membership Recruitment and Retention:* the process of establishing long-term relationships with individuals and groups for mutual benefit, professional growth, and continued engagement.
- *Effectiveness and Efficiency:* ACPA will be intentional and timely in producing desired results and will allocate human, fiscal, and technological resources to support these actions.
- *Professional and Career Development:* ACPA will provide innovative training, skill development, and continuing education opportunities.

The Governing Board continues to work at refining the goal statements and action steps under each of these themes. This work will be shared at the 2008 ACPA Convention in Atlanta. This strategic plan is a vehicle to enhance the distinctive strengths of ACPA which provide direction within the field. As we explore how we will build upon our successes and create new opportunities, these distinctive contributions will continue to be at the core of our efforts. The distinctive contributions are:

- *Multicultural Competence and Inclusion:* The association will foster an environment where diverse perspectives are honored, where members are challenged to broaden their understanding of others, and where each member's right to vote on associational business is paramount.
- *Student Learning:* The association will focus our practice on the fundamental purpose of helping students achieve, learn and develop.
- *Assessment:* The association will support efforts to educate members of the importance and practice of continually evaluating and improving our work.
- *Sustainability:* The association will support action and education within the higher education community that focuses equal attention on the environmental, social justice, and economic impacts of our choices.

Description of Process

Beginning at the Joint Meeting in 2007, ACPA Governing Board members and the Assembly Leadership (Coordinator of Commissions, Coordinator of State Divisions, Coordinator of Standing Committees and Coordinator of International Divisions) were asked to identify the strengths and challenges of ACPA. The list was analyzed and coded into themes as a way to synthesize and condense the data. Using a Delphi process, Governing Board members and Assembly Leaders were asked to identify and rank their top 25 themes. Because of the large number of themes a second round of ranking was used to further narrow the main themes.

During the 2007 Summer Leadership Meeting in St. Louis, the results of the prioritized themes were shared and discussed. Governing Board members worked to clarify and prioritize emerging themes. These themes were tested with Assembly Leaders as well. During the past few months, the Board has worked to narrow and define the goals of the strategic plan. At each Governing Board meeting we have set aside time to work on this process in small groups and as a large group. We have utilized a variety of techniques to test the efficacy, timeliness, congruence, and attainability of each goal. As each draft version of the plan was completed, it was sent to the Assembly Leadership for feedback.

At this time, the Governing Board members continue to work on refining the goal statements and developing measurable action steps with defined champions and collaborators who will steward the implementation and assessment of the goal for which they are responsible. A synopsis of the process will be provided at the 2008 Assembly Meeting and at the Business Meeting. As a Board, we are committed to the transparency of this process.

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