



VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Strategic Focus 2011 Frequently Asked Questions

Why has the process for requesting strategic funds changing?

In past budget cycles, we have often distributed a substantial amount of money to wide-ranging, but anticipated, essential projects (e.g., repairing roofs, procuring instructional technology, enabling transportation). The revised process removes these anticipated essential items (and the typical budgetary support for them) from the strategic funding pool and places them in a more appropriate funding pool. Thus, Strategic Funding is for projects that advance VSU strategically.

Why are this year's deadline dates so compressed?

This is the second year VSU has instituted Strategic Focus. The new budget model has identified Strategic Focus as a top priority which is not subjected to being funded from "sweep-up" money. The Vice President for Finance and Administration has rebalanced budgets to identify funds to be available beginning July 1 for projects that advance VSU in the [four identified standards](#).

Are deadline dates flexible?

No. Submission deadlines are posted at the Strategic Focus 2011 website at <http://www.valdosta.edu/sra/StrategicFocus2011.shtml>

I have a suggested program that is much larger than my department, and it will impact the entire university. Can I submit a university initiative?

Yes. If your initiative crosses multiple divisions, submit a [Proposal Form](#) accordingly with all necessary signatures and supporting documentation, and it will be considered by the Planning and Budget Council. These proposals should be brought to your Vice President by the first submission deadline (faculty/staff submissions to department heads) to be included in the process.

I have a suggested program that requires a long-term commitment from the university in order to move forward (i.e. a new degree program that requires USG and SACS approval). What do I do?

Submit a [Proposal Form](#) and note this information in the proposal description on the form so that the Planning and Budget Council can take this element into consideration. These proposals are anticipated and acceptable.

I understand what types of proposals should be submitted to Strategic Focus, but are there other funding sources?

Yes. Confer with your budget coordinator for your department, department head, or dean to ascertain if any money may have previously been set aside to support your proposal concept or if there are funds from salary salvage, grants, or gifts. The funding pools are discussed at the open Planning and Budget Council meetings (Fridays 9am -11am), and descriptions are available online at <http://www.valdosta.edu/pbc/>

Where can my department submit a request for a new position?

There are three options for funding new positions, as outlined in [Allocation and Funding of New Positions](#):

- 1) Strategic Focus. Submit a Strategic Focus proposal that aligns with a standard and demonstrates the need for a new position. Proposals are due in January.
- 2) New Position Allocation (based on a formulaic process using enrollment growth). New position requests are evaluated against all new position requests within each division. Funding calculations are available in [Allocation and Funding of New Positions](#).
- 3) Mid-Year Authorization through the Administrative Chain. Steps:
 - a. Reassign within the department (encouraged)
 - b. Reassign within the college (encouraged)
 - c. Reassign with Provost (rare/discouraged)
 - d. Shift budgeted funds through the Planning and Budget Council (very rare/discouraged)

How will funding be allocated by the Planning and Budget Council?

Strategic Focus funds are made on a one-year basis (fiscal year). Those initiatives found to be highly effective will need to request continued support for up to three years. Support for these initiatives in 2011 will be determined along with review of new proposals. After three consecutive years of funding, the allocation will become permanent to the department or as long as the program/activity continues.

I have ideas and would like to discuss them with someone before I submit them to my department chair, dean, or the Planning and Budget Council. Whom can I contact?

Proposers can discuss ideas with colleagues, their department head, dean, and/or Vice President. President Schloss has also extended an offer to meet with anyone who has an idea to assist in completing the form. An appointment can be scheduled with the President by contacting Melinda Cutchens (Cutchens@valdosta.edu or (229) 333-5952. Also, Dr. Kristina M. Cragg, Assistant to the President for Strategic Research and Analysis, is available to provide assistance in developing a revenue and expenditure analysis. You can email her at kmcragg@valdosta.edu or call the Office of Strategic Research and Analysis at (229) 245-6517 to schedule a meeting.

My proposal could be categorized into more than one Strategic Focus Standard. Do I have to choose one or could I select more than one?

You may select more than one standard option on the Proposal Form; however, concentrate on the standard which best aligns to your proposal concept.

I need research assistance with my proposal. Whom can I contact?

Your proposal should be complete and thoroughly researched before it is submitted to the Planning and Budget Council. If you need research assistance, the Office of Strategic Research and Analysis can provide you with certain work products. For example, Strategic Research and Analysis can recommend useful data resources to you or could provide you with a limited needs assessment ([example needs assessment](#)). Please allow sufficient time for any requests.

Is there a sample Strategic Focus submission I can see?

Yes. You can look at last years' [submissions](#) and [awardees](#) at the [Strategic Focus website](#).

What if a proposal opportunity arises mid-year (after the deadline) that is too good to pass up?

If an important proposal idea occurs prior to the scheduled Strategic Focus process, talk to your Vice President. The idea would be initiated by the respective Vice President to the Planning and Budget Council to capture the opportunity. The proposer will need to demonstrate that sufficient funding was not available within their department/dean, the Vice President will need to demonstrate that sufficient funding was not available within their division and that the opportunity is such that VSU should capture at this time utilizing university funding. The opportunity will be evaluated utilizing the Strategic Focus [proposal review form](#).

What is the likelihood that my proposal will be accepted?

This depends on the number of other proposals submitted, the subject of your proposal, and how your proposal is rated by PBC voting members. See the [proposal review form](#).

How long will it be until I find out whether my proposal was approved?

The Planning and Budget Council will make their recommendations to the President approximately April 30 of the initiative year. Soon after this date the faculty and department head, as well as the respective Vice President, will be notified if the proposal was approved.

How often should I submit a proposal?

The annual review will measure the effectiveness of the initiatives, with emphasis on the importance of this planning effort as a continuing practice at Valdosta State University. It is anticipated that the Planning and Budget Council will collect suggestions for new standards each fall and new initiative proposals that correspond with the standards each spring.

I received funding for Strategic Focus 2010 and included a 5-year plan. Do I need to submit a proposal for Strategic Focus 2011?

Yes, you must submit a new proposal each year to be considered for funding.

I have additional questions not covered above. Whom do I contact?

For information on the Strategic Focus process, contact Dr. Michael M. Black, Strategic Research and Analysis, at (229) 333-7831 or mblack@valdosta.edu.

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