

# **College of Education and Human Services Valdosta State University**

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT REPORT**

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**J.W. Fanning Institute  
for Leadership Development  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

**.College of Education and Human Services  
Valdosta State University  
Moving Forward: A Strategic Plan 2019-2021**

### **Executive Summary**

The Valdosta State University College of Education and Human Services (COEHS) retained the University of Georgia's J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development to facilitate a two day strategic planning retreat. At the retreat, the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) consisting of 14 members: the dean, associate deans, department heads, and administrative staff spent two days discussing potential new COEHS structures as well as working on the initial steps of a 3 year strategic plan.

COEHS department heads and administrators presented the state of the college followed by the findings from a recently completed faculty survey that sought information on the College's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities as well as the potential threats or obstacles facing the college.

Participants developed a vision for the college, revised their current mission to reflect the college today, and worked on identifying core values and guiding principles.

Discussion on how to most efficiently restructure the college led to consensus to have divisions with departments within the divisions. Three proposals emerged from the discussion—two of them providing information on how programs and/or departments can be grouped into divisions and one providing information on how to combine degrees to meet current jobs demand and several of the University strategic goals' outcomes.

The restructuring plan was followed by a process to identify critical issues and opportunities for the College for the next 3 years. These were themed resulting in six strategic priorities agreed upon by the group. Strategic priorities identified are: I) Student Focus, II) Faculty Development and Success, III) Diversity and Inclusion, IV) Revenue Sources and Long-term Sustainability, V) Programs, Initiatives, and Partnerships, and VI) Infrastructure.

Furthermore, preliminary strategies, goals, and high level actions were developed for each of the six strategic priorities.

Members of the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) from Valdosta State University College of Education and Human Services (COEHS) participated in a facilitated two day strategic planning retreat the last week of May, 2018. The retreat objectives were to better understand the “State of the College”, learn the results of the College SWOT analysis, plan for the College restructuring, and begin a strategic planning process.

### **State of the College and SWOT Analysis**

The first day of the retreat eight department heads, along with the director of program assessment, analytics, and evaluation, presented information on their departments. Their presentations included information on student trends and projections and well as department strengths, concerns, and future direction.

Following the presentations, the results of the faculty SWOT analysis report were presented.

### **Plan for the College Restructuring**

Key to a strategic plan process are a collective vision, a mission that reflects the work of the institution, and identification of the values and principles that guide organizational behaviors and actions. To begin the discussion on the restructuring of the College, participants engaged in a visioning exercise. As a result, the SPC developed a vision, revised their mission and identified five core values. The Dean decided that the SPC will make final edits and decisions on the vision, mission, and core values (Small Group Ideas in Appendix A).

#### **Vision**

Presently the college does not have a vision statement. The outcome of the visioning activity generated two possible statements, as follows:

- Transform lives across generations, locally, regionally, and globally through education.
- Transform lives – societal, community, globally through education. Lifelong learners.

#### **Mission**

The current mission states that The Dewar College of Education & Human Services prepares professionals for multiple roles in educational settings and community agencies; fosters a culture of reflective, evidence-based practice and inquiry within a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff; provides leadership in the improvement of the education, health, and well-being of citizens in this region, the nation, and the world; and develops effective, responsive scholars and practitioners who use theory, research, and collaboration to enhance their work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

#### **Mission Proposed Revision**

The proposed mission states that The Dewar College of Education & Human Services prepares professionals for multiple roles in educational settings and community agencies and develops effective, responsive scholars and practitioners who use theory, research, and collaboration to advance a global, diverse, and technological society.

## Core Values

- Student-Centered, Student-Focused, Student Success (as the focus of all decisions), All about Students, Student Engagement, Impact, Generations.
- Collaboration, teamwork, unity of focus (in cause)
- Collegiality
- Transformational – Transformative – Societal Impact
- Diversity – Inclusion – Equity (Social Justice)

The following are examples for how the COEHS can articulate their values:

- **Collaboration:** We engage with individuals and organizations to create successful partnerships and collaborations.
- **Diversity:** We foster a culture of inclusion and equity where every voice matters.
- **Student-centered:** We view our students as the focus of our College.

## College Restructuring

Next in the process, the Dean addressed the need to re-structure the College to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.

As part of the restructuring, the facilitators posed several questions for discussion:

- What is the reason/purpose of the restructuring?
- What are main proposed changes?
- What will be different as a result of the restructuring? And how will these changes result in academic and other benefits?

The consensus of the SPC indicated that the purpose and benefits of the restructuring is multifaceted as follows:

- Most efficient use of time and resources
- Encourage and support synergies
- Maximize faculty potential and strengths
- Minimize redundancies
- Build on unique programs
- Increases recognition of college
- Meets VSU goals for cross college collaboration

A brainstorming session on possible changes generated over 30 ideas; comments can be seen in full in Appendix B. As part of the brainstorming debrief, participants were asked to discuss the data and evidence that supported their proposed changes. The group as a whole cited the results of the faculty SWOT as well as data provided by department heads and staff during the State of the College presentations.

Potential new structures for the college are based on creating divisions under which departments are housed. The following two figures show the new structures proposed for the College.

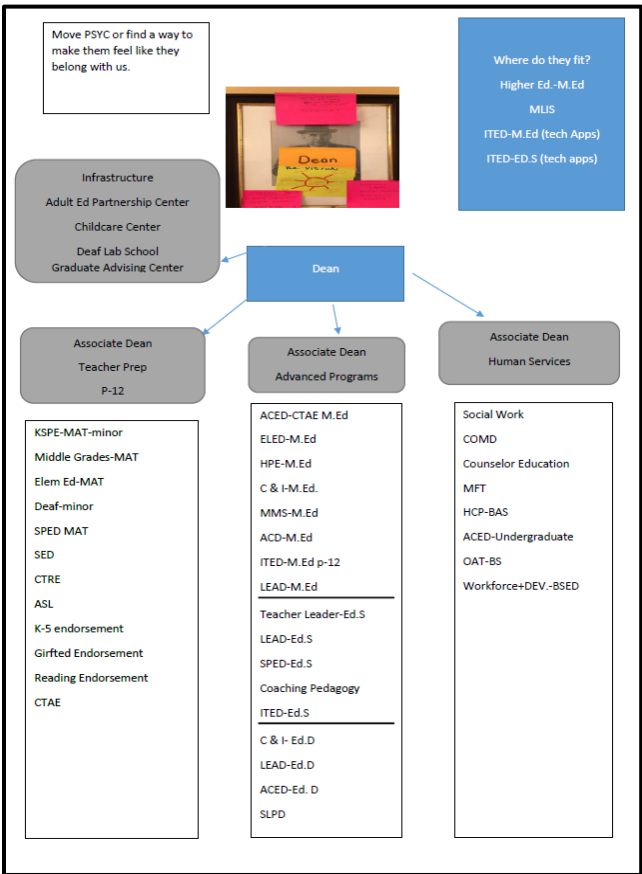


Figure1. Group 1 Proposed New Structure

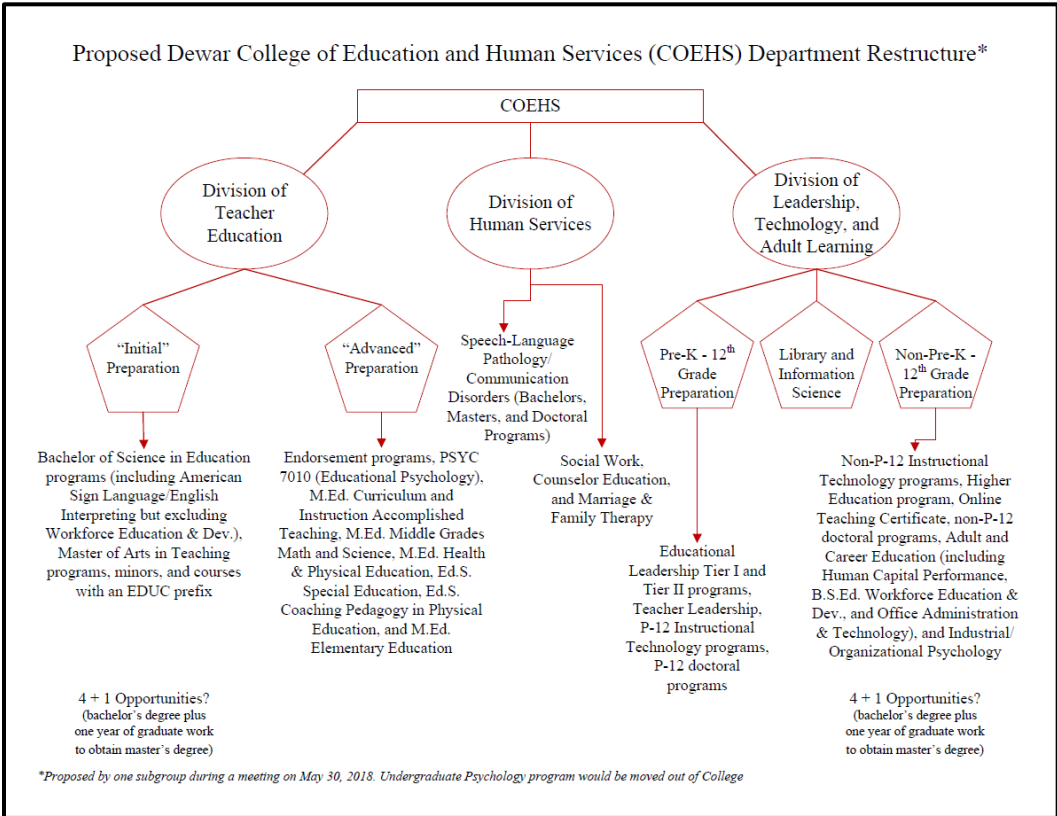


Figure 2. Group 2 Proposed New Structure

While two groups presented proposals for the College restructuring, one group presented a proposal of merging programs with the rationale, justification, and linkage to the VSU Strategic Plan 2022, see figure below.

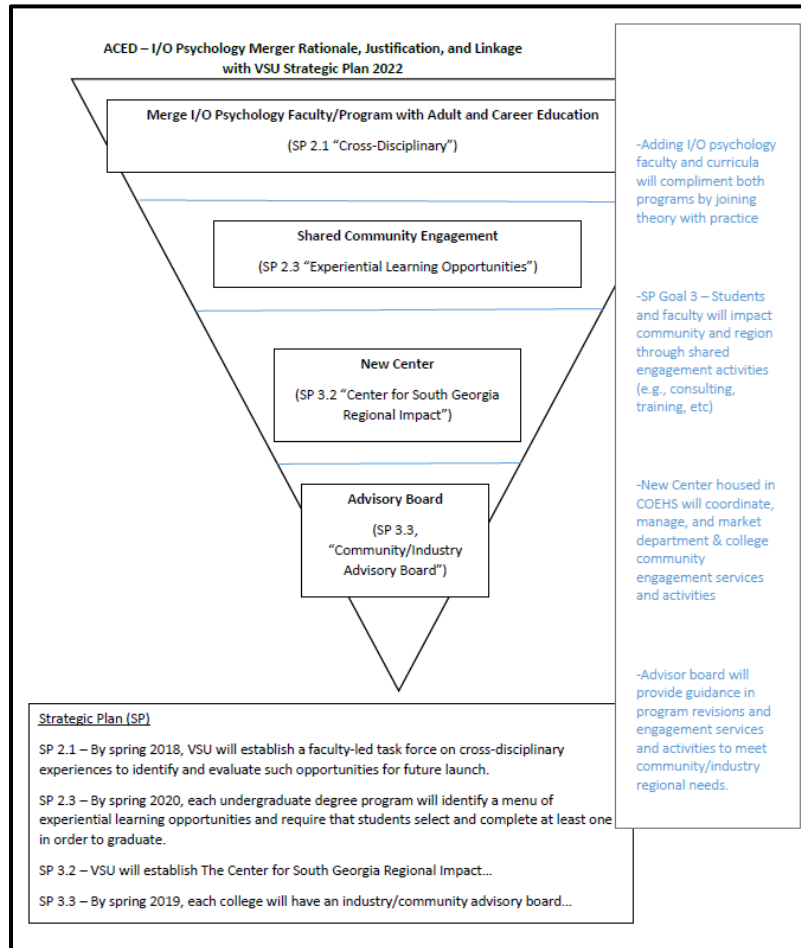


Figure 3. Group 3 Programs Merger Proposal

## Critical Issues and Opportunities

The restructuring plan discussion was followed by a process to identify critical issues and opportunities for the College for the next 3 years. These were themed resulting in six strategic priorities agreed upon by the group. Additionally, preliminary strategies and goals were identified for each one of the six strategic priorities.

## Strategic Planning Process: Critical Issues and Priorities

Identifying the issues facing and opportunities open to the college was a key retreat objective. Given the State of the College presentations, the results of the SWOT, and the conversation on the proposed restructuring, participants were invited to:

- Engage in table discussions to determine the top critical issues and/or opportunities that the College could address in the next 3 years.
- Describe each critical issue/opportunity in a phrase or two on separate ½ sheets.

As a large group, the issues and opportunities were themed and six strategic priorities were identified as follows:

**Strategic Priority I. Student Focus.** Understanding that our students are at the center of the College's work, this priority focuses on the recruitment, enrollment, advising, and retention of our students.

**Strategic Priority II. Faculty Development and Success.** Recognizing that exceptional faculty are key to the success of our students and College, this priority addresses faculty roles, professional development, promotion and tenure.

**Strategic Priority III. Diversity and Inclusion.** Understanding that including the voices of all is of utmost importance, and that equity and social justice are key tenets of diversity and inclusion, this priority addresses the need to be responsive to all groups and cultures.

**Strategic Priority IV. Revenue Sources and Long-term Sustainability.** Acknowledging the importance of revenue generation now and in the long term, this priority addresses avenues for increased revenue and stakeholder (alumni) engagement.

**Strategic Priority V. Programs, Initiatives and Partnerships.** Recognizing the need to develop experiential opportunities and other initiatives, programs and partnerships, this priority addresses the need to develop and implement programs that meet the evolving needs of students and community.

**Strategic Priority VI. Infrastructure.** Understanding that facilities and infrastructure are key elements of productivity, this priority seeks to align facility with programs to improve cross discipline planning and collaboration.

### **Strategic Priorities, High Level Actions, and Measures.**

Each Strategic Priority has associated descriptive high level actions/tasks. Indicators by which actions will be measured for progress and success is the next area the SPC will work on.

Strategic Priority	Potential Strategies/Goals	High Level Actions/Tactics
<p><b>1. Student Focus: recruitment, enrollment, retention, and graduates</b></p>	<p>By 2019, create targeted marketing plan to introduce and increase understanding of College majors, experiential learning, and career opportunities open to potential, admitted, and enrolled students.</p>	<p>Hire a dedicated marketing specialist for student recruitment. Create opportunities for faculty to participate in recruitment efforts.</p> <p>Market teaching and learning including adult learning, P-12, and experiential learning</p>
<p><b>2. Diversity and Inclusion (social justice, equity)</b></p>	<p>By 2019, create culturally responsive activities for faculty, staff, and students that embraces inclusion and increases understanding of equity and social justice.</p>	<p>Appoint a Dean's Task Force for D &amp; I composed of faculty, staff, and students to create a plan to be implemented by fall 2019.</p>



<p><b>3. Faculty Development and Success</b></p>	<p>By 2018, align faculty roles with new COEHS structure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and revise faculty roles.</li> <li>• Examine faculty allocation of workload.</li> <li>• Obtain faculty input.</li> <li>• Realign positions.</li> <li>• Evaluate effectiveness of re-alignment.</li> </ul>
	<p>By 2019, review and revise faculty promotion and tenure process to align with new COEHS structure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicate how?</li> </ul>
	<p>By fall 2019, empower faculty to take ownership of their professional development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a new process to communicate needs and support faculty development.</li> <li>• Share success stories at annual fall meetings.</li> </ul>
	<p>By 2019, re-operationalize promotion and tenure to reflect culture of work.</p> <p>By 2019, empower the faculty [to stop dwelling on the past] to move forward in a positive direction as a consolidated team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicate how?</li> <li>• Indicate how?</li> </ul>

Strategic Priority	Potential Strategies/Goals	High Level Actions/Tactics
<p><b>4. Revenue Sources and Long-term Sustainability</b></p>	<p>By 2019, explore sources and create a list of possible grant opportunities to increase the long term sustainability of identified programs and initiatives such as support centers and lab schools.</p> <p>By 2020, create an alumni association to involve College alumni to engage alumni with current students and in fund-development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine criteria and create list of 20 grant opportunities.</li> <li>• Select 5 grants to pursue each year.</li>   <li>• Indicate how?</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Programs, Initiatives, and Partnerships</b></p>	<p>By fall 2018, schedule a meeting with the President, provost, Associate Provost, and COEHS Department Heads Council to discuss how to leverage the success of the graduate programs</p> <p>By spring 2019, identify and prioritize possible new initiatives, partnerships, and programs to . . .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile data to present at meeting with VSU leadership.</li>   <li>• Review College/VSU policies and practices to provide more flexibility for programs.</li>   <li>• Based on selection criteria, pursue 2 new initiatives or programs, and 2 partnerships each year. [Nexus; public &amp; private school partnerships]</li> </ul>

Strategic Priority	Potential Strategies/Goals	High Level Actions/Tactics
<p><b>5. Programs, Initiatives, and Partnerships</b></p>	<p>By 2020, position COEHS programs as premier opportunities that are respected and recognized in the professional community at the state, national and international levels so as to benefit students, alumni, and faculty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-conceptualize assessment system to inform program improvement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Infrastructure</b></p>	<p>By 2020, remodel existing facilities or relocate COEHS to an appropriate building that will accommodate and strengthen collaboration, teambuilding, cross-curricular interdisciplinary planning and creative endeavors.</p> <p>By 2020, better align programs to location as a way to improve collaboration, teambuilding, cross-curricular interdisciplinary planning and creative endeavors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct degree audit in relationship to physical location.</li> <li>• Indicate How?</li> </ul>

**Next Steps: COEHS Administrative Plan and Process**

The SPC discussed the following:

- How to obtain faculty involvement and input
- How to use existing college committee structure to obtain input and finalize plan
- Finalize a timeline to complete the strategic plan
- Promote new COEHS image to VSU Administration

Additionally, it was decided that the strategic plan would be revealed by the Dean in August 2018 during opening time. There would then be a period for faculty feedback.

The plan is to be completed by December 8<sup>th</sup> and presented to the Provost shortly thereafter.

## Appendix A

### Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Connecting images to their vision for COEHS

#### Group 1

- Our students will be ready and eager to test their chosen waters
- We will have a continuing impact through future generations
- A college that can understand where and how the extreme variety of pieces fit together where every piece is different
- Embracing our glorious, fruity variety and soaking up all the knowledge

#### Group 2

- Broaden our thinking
- Unity with a sole purpose: students
- Increased diversity (students, faculty, staff)
- Focus of our power to **transform lives across generations through education**

#### Group 3

- A strong foundation that withstands societal challenges
- The foundation of education lasts through time
- Working together to achieve the same goals and everyone has an important role – responsibilities may differ but we are working towards the same goal.

### Values Identification

These 5 values were consistent:

- Student-Centered, Student-Focused, Student Success (as the focus of all decisions), All about Students, Student Engagement, Impact, Generations.
- Collaboration, teamwork, unity of focus (in cause)
- Collegiality
- Transformational – Transformative – Societal Impact
- Diversity – Inclusion – Equity (Social Justice)

These following values were mentioned once or twice:

- Integrity
- Hard work
- Academic Rigor
- Flexibility
- Mutual respect
- Acceptance
- Sustainability
- Feel work is valued
- Positive reinforcement

- Constructive criticism
- Respect
- Transparency
- Life-long learning
- Contributions to the scholarship
- Shared governance

### **Mission**

The Dewar College of Education & Human Services prepares professionals for multiple roles in educational settings and community agencies; fosters a culture of reflective, evidence-based practice and inquiry within a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff; provides leadership in the improvement of the education, health, and well-being of citizens in this region, the nation, and the world; and develops effective, responsive scholars and practitioners who use theory, research, and collaboration to enhance their work in a global, diverse, and technological society

### **Proposed Revision**

The Dewar College of Education & Human Services prepares professionals for multiple roles in educational settings and community agencies and develops effective, responsive scholars and practitioners who use theory, research, and collaboration to advance a global, diverse, and technological society.

## Appendix B

### Brainstorming Ideas

- Teacher Preparation All Together
- P-12 Initial Teacher Ed All Together
- Teacher Leadership with Ed. leadership
- Advanced Certification C & I, Teacher Leadership, & Endorsements
- MFT, Social Work, School Counseling, Interpreting, COMD
- Counseling-initial Educator preparation
- P-12 service certifications
- Combine all Doctoral programs
- Endorsements with all graduate programs
- MLIS Stay in COEHS, Where does MLIS fit?
- Minors go with the major
- Marketing person
- Grant person
- Adult Education Center/Partnerships
- Geographic Proximity of like departments
- Deaf Education and Interpreting Lab School-Regional Initiatives
- I/O Psychology with ACED & Leadership
- Move PE Activity classes out of our college
- Have divisions with departments within the division
- Associate Deans for certain areas
- Who runs a division? Associate Dean, Assistant Dean?
- Advising
- Accreditation support
- Program autonomy for Accreditation

### Key questions:

- What are our comparable universities?
- Does the name of our college reflect who we are?