**GOAL WRITING OVERVIEW**

**MISSION**The goals you develop for your operational unit should support your mission. Make sure to keep your mission nearby as you write your goals.

**GOALS**

***Goals describe broad outcomes and concepts expressed in general terms.***  They provide a direction or aspiration for your unit. The specific ways that you implement and assess these goals will come later in the ILEARN process when you will write your objectives (outcomes). Each operational unit will likely have a different approach to writing their goals, but here is a list of steps to go through to get you started.

1. Review current trends in your area/field/discipline.
2. Review current RRCC goals, initiatives, or directions and evaluate where your OU fits in.
3. Have an open dialogue with your unit.
	1. **Start talking to people.** Below are some questions to discuss with your operational unit to get you all thinking about what goals you would like to establish. These will be the goals that drive your 4-year operational unit plan proposal. Please see the attached page for some sample questions to help you start the conversation. This list is in no way comprehensive, but rather provides a jumping off point.
	2. **Collect and review documents that describe your operational unit.** Look at any brochures, catalogue descriptions, past evaluations, or program reviews from your unit to look for consistent themes and messaging.
	3. **Review and react to goals from other similar units.** Find goals for a similar unit (financial aid department, biology program, etc. and discuss as a group. Ask yourselves:

*Does your program need to look at guided pathways? Are there exceptional experiences that you could incorporate? How are you collaborating with other areas of the college? Are there ways you want to improve your communication within or outside of your unit?*

1. Draft your goals.

After a group discussion, it generally works best for one OU member to draft the goals and send them out to the group or come back together for discussion.

1. Allow space for feedback.

Getting feedback from members of your operational unit is very important. Don’t assume that after the initial discussion that everyone is still on the same page. Often times asking the types of questions goal-writing necessitates can spur lots of new ideas and contemplation.

**How many goals should we have?**

The number of goals will vary by operational unit, as will the types. Your goals should capture the big picture ways to way your operational unit to develop of improve over the next 4 years.

**Does your unit have too many goals?**

This can be one of the problems we run into when we start to think about all the things we do and people we serve. You will, however, want to keep your list of goals manageable. If you have too many, try imagining if you wanted to reduce material or costs by 25 percent. What goals would you keep? Which ones would you discard?

**GOAL WRITING CHECKLIST**

For each goal, make sure you can affirm that these items apply:

* Does the goal support our operational unit mission?
* Does the goal reflect trends or best practices in our area?
* Does the goal support student learning or success?
* Does the goal make sense considering the students you currently serve or hope to serve?
* Does the goal describe a higher level of functioning for our unit?
* Does the goal seem attainable based on current resource allocation? *(This one isn’t a deal-breaker, but like all elements will require discussion with your OU’s leadership.)*

**Questions to Ask when Setting Goals**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Operational Goals | Service Goals | Student Learning Goals |
| Administrative Units | How does our office function?What are the internal processes we have and what would success look like for us and those we serve? What external process do we contribute to and what does success look like for those processes? | What areas of the college do we support? What areas outside the college do we support?What would excellent service to these areas look like? How can we support an inclusive college environment? | N/A - (Since administrative units are focused on supporting the other areas of the college , you most likely will not have any student learning goals. |
| Student Services Units | How does our office function?What are the internal processes we have and what would success look like for us and those we serve? What external process do we contribute to and what does success look like for those processes? How can we contribute to diversity and equitable outcomes for students? | What services do we provide and who do we provide them to? What would excellent service to these customers look like? How can we support an inclusive college environment? | Who are our students?What should our students know or be able to do after participating in our programs? What is our role in contributing to the common learning outcomes? |
| Academic Units | How does our office function?What are the internal processes we have and what would success look like for us and those we serve? What external process do we contribute to and what does success look like for those processes? What are the trends in our discipline? Are there best practices we should be incorporating? What college goals or initiatives do we support? How do we plan to move those initiatives forward?How can we contribute to diversity and equitable outcomes for students? | What services do we provide and to whom? Does our operational unit provide a primary service outside of teaching and student development? What are those things we must do well to contribute to the institution in terms of process and procedures? (Since academic units are focused on teaching, you may very well not have a service goal.) | Who are our students? What should our students know or be able to do after completing our program? How does our curriculum support our mission? |

**GOAL WRITING WORKSHEET**

|  |
| --- |
| Operational Unit Mission Statement |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Operational Unit Goal | How the goal supports the Operational Unit Mission |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| People involved in writing these goals: |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| Briefly describe the process you used to arrive at these goals: |
|  |