

Triton College Strategic Plan Assessment

Triton College will engage in regular assessment on its strategic plan. The purpose of this assessment is multifaceted:

1. Track Progress

Regular, systematic assessment helps the Action Champions, Advisory Committees, Core Team, and College Council understand the status of its strategic planning initiatives and potential barriers encountered by individuals and departments. Assessment, along with regular communication through the institution's shared governance structure, will provide a strong understanding of the hurdles facing our strategic planning actions and will help individuals, departments, and teams to troubleshoot problems.

2. Measure Results

As important as it is to understand the progress of the actions, it is equally important to understand the impact that the actions have on Triton College's institutional outcomes of increasing college readiness, improving completion, and closing workforce skill gaps. Do the actions demonstrate measurable progress in these areas? Is there a noticeable difference between results before the action and following the action? By understanding the true impact of its initiatives through measurable results, Triton College may take more meaningful action, such as expanding initiatives that prove successful and changing course on initiatives that are not yielding results.

3. Stay Current

To remain vibrant and relevant, the strategic plan's actions will need to be reviewed at least once a year to ensure that they continue to serve the institution's outcomes and appropriately reflect the work and priorities of the institution's departments. A regular review of these items will also ensure that the campus community remains familiar with the strategic plan and continues to align departmental goals and outcomes with the institution's objectives of increasing college readiness, improving completion, and closing skill gaps.

4. Align Budgeting

Triton is committed to fully integrating its budgeting, planning, and assessment processes. A meaningful budget process must be data driven to ensure that the institution is allocating resources to initiatives that further Triton College's larger institutional goals.

The assessment process developed by Triton College for its strategic plan is designed to fulfill all four purposes stated above.

Action Item Assessment is led by the Action Champion and Focus Area Assessment is led by the Director of Planning and Accreditation. Action Champions, the Strategic Plan Core Team, and the Strategic Plan Steering Committee all participate in the annual plan update. Each of these items is detailed further in the “Documentation” section below.

Documentation

Triton College’s assessment process for its strategic plan has been evolving since its inception in FY2015. The institution’s goal is to create an assessment process that includes clear, concise, and purposeful documentation without being overly burdensome or repetitive. Documentation should capture meaningful evaluation of data as the institution analyzes its progress. That analysis then informs the allocation of institutional resources during the institution’s annual budgeting process.

Semi-Annual Reporting

In the first year of the Strategic Plan (FY2015), semi-annual reports were produced in November (Summer Semester update), February (Fall Semester update), and June (Spring Semester update). In July 2016, following the first full completion of the annual assessment cycle, the College Council evaluated the assessment process and recommended a change from three assessment reports per year to two assessment report per year to lessen the burden of the assessment process and increase the quality of data coming forward in each report.

Additionally, it was recommended that the assessment cycle change from the college’s fiscal year (July – June) to the calendar year (January – December) so that the results of the annual report would better align with the college’s annual budgeting process.

Beginning calendar year 2016, the college publishes two Strategic Reports annually:

- ***Mid-Year Strategic Plan Progress Report*** (published in June)
This report provides specific updates regarding progress made throughout the year on each action item in the strategic plan. The report focuses strongly on operational headway, as opposed to the achievement of specific outcomes.
- ***Strategic Plan Annual Report*** (published in December)
This report focuses on the institution’s performance against set metrics and outcomes at the strategic direction level and action item level.

Action Item Assessment

The semi-annual reports are strongly informed by Action Item Assessment, led by the Action Champions. Prior to January 2016, this assessment was captured via word document templates

and included as Appendices in the semi-annual reports. As of January 2016, this assessment is captured via the college's assessment management system, TK20. Within TK20, Action Champions articulate outcomes for each of their actions, link outcomes to other relevant action items, and assess the achievement of the outcomes and the conclusion of the year. Automated reports allow for quick access to specific data that individuals within the system would like to view. Data from this analysis may then inform departmental and divisional budget presentations as part of the college's annual comparative budgeting process.

Annual Plan Update

To remain a healthy and vibrant planning tool, the strategic plan must be a living document that captures improvements, modifications, and changes of course. In the spirit of continuous improvement and growth, the institution has an annual cycle for updating its planning tool every fiscal year. This cycle is designed to align with the college's institution's annual budgeting process.

As noted above, departmental and divisional areas utilize data from action assessment and the strategic plan reports to inform departmental and divisional budget recommendations and requests within the college's comparative budgeting process. Following the presentation of this data, the Executive Team provides guidance to areas regarding their proposed divisional and departmental goals, as well as their proposed budget requests. After this guidance is issued, the Core Team revisits the college's strategic plan to make necessary changes (additions, deletions, or modifications) to its planning actions so that its documentation continues to appropriately reflect the work of the college.

The changes recommended by the Core Team are sent to the Steering Committee for review and endorsement in the spring prior to the start of the fiscal year (July). Strategic Planning documents are updated on the college's website just prior to the start of the fiscal year.

The flow of the strategic plan's assessment process is cyclical, each step informing the next throughout the course of the fiscal year. The strategic plan drives action assessment, the results of that assessment inform the budgeting process, the budgeting process determines institutional resource allocation, and resource allocation funds the strategic planning actions. Through this process, the institution engages in meaningful self-evaluation, growth, and improvement.