



UNIVERSITY
of BELIZE

The Way Ahead

Transforming the University of Belize



Strategic Plan

Summary

Office of the Board of Trustees

January 2011

INTRODUCTION

The University of Belize has completed its strategic planning process to strengthen its ability to play a significant role in shaping Belize's future, contributing towards national development goals and building capacity to face the challenges of a globalized world. The strategic plan recognizes the University's short- and long-term commitments to academic excellence and integrity, and seeks to direct the continued transformation of the University of Belize into the premier, national, degree-granting institution, and the foundation stone for Belize's future leaders.

The statement of vision, core values, strategic goals and objectives, and action strategies for the transformation of the University reflect and extensive process of observations, analysis, and consultations involving Board members, University administration, faculty and staff members, students and alumni and other stakeholders, between June 2008 and February 2009.

A vision with a plan is more than a dream...with the input and support from partnerships at all levels, this dream can become a reality...we are seeking partners, both

technical and financial, to assist us in achieving this vision. The University is now ready to implement the identified strategies through a series of Action Plans....come and join us...



Dr. Santos Mahung



Dr. Angel Cal



Dr. Corinth Morte-Lewis

PREFACE

This strategic plan outlines the principal elements that will direct the continued transformation of the University of Belize into the premier degree-granting, national institution for our nation. These elements are anchored in national development priorities and aspirations of Belizeans and are the means by which the University becomes an important catalyst for national development. It contains the vision, mission, core values, strategic goals and objectives, and action strategies for the transformation of the University. This strategic plan will provide direction and guidance to the University in responding to its mandate to be the national university of Belize.

This strategic plan reflects extensive conversations, observations, and analysis of materials carried out between June 2008 and February 2009. Members of the Board of Trustees and of the university administration, faculty and staff members, students and alumni of the university, members of the Association of Tertiary Level Institutions of Belize and members of the public and private sectors participated in a process of generating a rich collection of ideas on the way forward and of identifying and analyzing objectives and strategies for the development of the university.

The vision, goals and objectives are clear. Moving forward now requires detailed planning of strategies, actions, timelines, and responsibilities for implementing the plan in a reasonable, realistic, and expeditious way. This strategic plan sets the framework for determining the needs for infrastructure, human resources, support services, and budget.

The University acknowledges that this strategic plan will require great efforts from the university community and nation. But achieving the vision of this plan is not optional. The national university of Belize must aspire to great things worthy of the nation and its present and future generations. In the words of Daniel Hudson Burnham, a great visionary and one of the fathers of urban planning:

Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will not die, but long after we are gone be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistence.

We challenge ourselves as a University to be positive, visionary, and engaged. We offer an invitation to our stakeholders to join us in reaching our vision for the University of Belize, and for the nation and citizens of Belize, and we thank each one who played a part in the development of this strategic plan.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I Morrison'.

Mrs. Imani Fairweather Morrison
Chairman of the Board of Trustees



UNIVERSITY *of* BELIZE

Strategic Plan

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1.0 Mission, Vision and Core Values

1.1 MISSION FOR THE UNIVERSITY

The University of Belize is a national, autonomous and multi-location institution committed to excellence in higher education, research and service for national development. As a catalyst of change it provides relevant, affordable and accessible educational and training programs that address national needs based on principles of academic freedom, equity, transparency, merit and accountability.

1.2 VISION FOR TRANSFORMATION OF THE UNIVERSITY

The intention is the transformation of the University as a recognized university in the region and as the premier degree-granting university in Belize, which is student-centred and which responds to the national development needs and priorities of the country and aspirations of higher education.

1.3 CORE VALUES

The Core Values of the Strategic Plan provide the principles that guide UB's implementation of the goals and objectives, to be promoted as part of the culture of the institution:

- Excellence and Merit
- Relevance and Contribution to National Needs
- Spirit of Inquiry and Academic Freedom
- Diversity and Equitable Access
- Sustainability and Future Orientation
- Accountability and Transparency
- Empowerment and Initiative

“Education is the vehicle for personal and social development and the means whereby students examine values and forge their identities, becoming successful individuals and contributing members of their communities.”

President Dr. Santos Mahung



2.0 Strategic Directions

The Strategic Goals, Strategic Objectives, and Action Strategies provide the strategic directions for the University¹. While the goals and objectives provide the direction to travel, the strategic plan is considered to be a living document, not a rigid set of rules and regulations, and is designed to allow scope for innovation and integration of new ideas based on our participatory culture. Annual reviews will ensure the plan is amended to reflect improved understanding, new ideas and new circumstances.

A. Achieving Academic Excellence

The University will achieve rigour and excellence in learning, research and service to become the premier degree-granting university in Belize and a recognized university in the Central American and Caribbean regions.

B. Building an Inclusive Learner-Centred Network

The University of Belize will be transformed into an inclusive, learner-centred network that provides a diversity of higher education services to all social groups in all areas of the nation using the best feasible approaches and technologies.

C. Contributing to National and Local Development

The University of Belize will become the academic leader for national and local development and advancement of Belize through its education, research, and service.

D. Improving Governance and Management

The University of Belize will establish governance and management systems that will enable it to fully achieve its mission, vision, core values, and strategic directions.

¹ More detail on Action Strategies is provided in the full strategic plan document.

A. ACHIEVING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Strategic Goal A: The University will achieve rigour and excellence in learning, research and service to become the premier degree-granting university in Belize and a recognized university in the Central American and Caribbean regions.

A great university is founded on the excellence and relevance of its education, research, and service to society. The University has made progress in its first decade. It is now committed to becoming *the* premier degree-granting university in Belize and a recognized university in the Central American and Caribbean regions. This responds to the aspirations of the Belizean people for rigour and excellence in learning, research and service. It positions the University to become a fully accredited institution of higher learning.

There are four directions for achieving this strategic goal:

- A1. Fostering a University Culture
- A2. Enhancing Quality of Teaching
- A3. Providing Learning Support Services
- A4. Leading in National Education



A1. Fostering a University Culture

Strategic Objective A1: Create a vibrant and intellectual university culture with a spirit of discovery, excellence, and service.

Action Strategies

A1.01 Design and conduct educational and participatory processes with each university community sector (students, staff, and faculty) to explore, identify, and promote a vibrant and intellectual university culture.

A1.02 Establish policies, procedures, training, incentives and penalties to foster the evolving university culture.

A1.03 Provide relevant training in leadership, management, supervision, training-the trainers, and conflict resolution for administrators and staff in order to facilitate a positive culture.

A2. Fostering a University Culture Enhancing Quality of Teaching, Research and Service

Strategic Objective A2: Ensure that the University's quality of teaching, research and service is the best in Belize and comparable to accredited and respected universities in the Western Hemisphere.

Action Strategies

A2.01 Develop a University Teaching and Learning Effectiveness Strategy to set priorities for improving teaching quality and learning effectiveness (Strategic Objective A2) and learner support services (Strategic Objective A3).

A2.02 Develop and implement academic programs, policies, standards, schedules, and procedures to evaluate and improve academic performance of all programs.

A2.03 Develop and implement policies and programs for recruiting, hiring, promoting, and giving tenure to faculty with strong academic qualifications, a spirit of excellence and performance in teaching, research and service, and based on accreditation standards.

A2.04 Evaluate faculty performance and enhance faculty development programs, policies and procedures to achieve excellence in teaching and meet accreditation standards.

A2.05 Enhance learning infrastructure and conditions to promote teaching and learning effectiveness. This includes issues such as: high quality faculty buildings and classrooms, laboratories, workshops, meeting spaces, music rooms, art rooms, physical education space, sports and recreation space, adequate equipment, state-of-the-art ICT, specialized libraries, teaching supplies, teaching technology, furniture, ventilation, lighting, bathrooms, mosquito screens, and security.

A2.06 Evaluate textbooks and learning materials and utilize materials more appropriate and relevant to the needs of Belize and also compatible with accreditation standards

A3. P A2. Fostering a University Culture Enhancing Quality of Teaching, Research and Service Providing Learning Support Services

Strategic Objective A3: Provide full support to learners to enable them to master the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to succeed in university courses and programs.

Action Strategies

A3.01 Establish a Learning Support Center to assist students in their academic work and transition to university life

A3.02 Establish an office for student accounts and financial aid (SAFA) to administer and expand funds for student subsistence and academic expenses on an equitable and merit basis

A3.03 Provide career development and placement services for students and graduates

A4. A3. P A2. Fostering a University Culture Enhancing Quality of Teaching, Research and Service; Providing Learning Support Services; Leading Partnerships in National Education

Strategic Objective A4: Take the lead in establishing active and effective learning partnerships with domestic and international academic and scholarly institutions in order to advance the education of Belizeans.

Action Strategies

A4.01 Strengthen leadership presence in the Association of Tertiary Level Institutions of Belize (ATLIB); Consejo Superior Universitario Centroamericano (CSUCA); Consortium for Belize Educational Cooperation (COBEC), and other inter-institutional bodies

A4.02 Develop active partnerships with Belizean tertiary educational institutions and other education associations to improve and diversify academic programs

A4.03 Develop academic and institutional policies to facilitate course articulation and transferability between UB and other tertiary level institutions in Belize.

A4.04 Develop an International Education Program to promote active partnerships with educational institutions abroad to foster mutually- beneficial joint projects, programs and events

A4.05 Evaluate opportunities to provide short and medium-term accommodation at a campus centre for visiting faculty, scholars, partners, and other guests.

A4.06 Promote improvements in primary and secondary school programs to prepare and recruit students for university studies.

B. BUILDING A LEARNER-CENTRED NETWORK

***Strategic Goal B:** The University of Belize will be transformed into an inclusive, learner-centred network that provides a diversity of higher education services to all social groups in all areas of the nation using the best feasible approaches and technologies.*

The University develops knowledge, skills, and attitudes to serve a developing economy and society. It also builds capacity in government, businesses, non-government organizations, and the professions. But in building the nation, the national university builds the whole nation – all social and ethnic groups, all geographic areas, all qualified citizens. The University must provide education in a range of academic disciplines and program areas. It must also find ways to provide country-wide access to education. At the same time, it has to also find ways to ensure that the social profile of the student body more closely reflects the socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural diversity of the country. As a student-centred institution, the University must give close attention to ongoing recruitment, retention, graduation, and employment rates of its students.

There are four directions for achieving this strategic goal:

- B1. Diversifying Education and Training Offerings
- B2. Delivering Inclusive Country-Wide Education Programs
- B3. Promoting Inter-Institutional Partnerships
- B4. Creating a Living Campus Environment



B1. Diversifying Education and Training Offerings

Strategic Objective B1: Diversify the educational program options and curricula to serve the broad needs of Belizeans in all disciplines where possible.

Action Strategies

B1.01 Develop a learning partnership strategy to enhance education and training relationships with industry and business, communities, non-profit organizations, and educational associations.

B1.02 Reorient University academic programs and reallocate resources as needed to respond to key national needs and student aspirations and career prospects.

B1.03 Provide a diversity of academic training and management and professional education programs to address national needs and to serve workers, managers, professionals, students, and other learners.

B1.04 Strengthen and diversify a Continuing and Professional Education Program to reach all districts and ethnic groups in support of both academic and non-academic programs, in cooperation with local institutions and organizations.

B1.05 Evaluate opportunities to offer selected graduate study programs at the University.

B2. Delivering Inclusive Country-Wide Programs

Strategic Objective B2: Ensure that education and training programs with sufficient demand are available in all districts of Belize and to all social groups.

Action Strategies

B2.01 Implement programs to actively recruit and retain students and other learners from across all areas of the country and from all socio-economic, ethnic, cultural, disabled groups, especially under-represented groups.

B2.02 Develop diversified academic program delivery systems for extending the reach of University education and training programs.

B2.03 Establish mechanisms to promote experiential learning, service learning, fieldwork, internships and practicums for appropriate degree programs to foster practical learning, professional skills, and student career opportunities.

B2.04 Develop university-wide open and distance learning programs using innovative communication and information technologies to establish the University as a comprehensive provider of distance education and open learning.

B2.05 Offer multi-level degree-granting academic programs on all campuses.

B3. Creating a Vital University Community

Strategic Objective B3: Create a vital university community that fosters good relationships, health and wellness, and active involvement.

Action Strategies

B3.01 Provide active program support and facilities for on-campus groups and activities that enhance university life and connect to the community.

B3.02 Provide comprehensive university-wide support programs for health and wellness.

B3.03 Provide active program support and facilities to achieve full access and acceptance of women and men, all ethnic and social groups, and persons with disabilities.

B3.04 Provide active program support and facilities for on-campus programs for athletic and intramural sports activities, arts, music, entertainment, and performing arts activities.

B4. Creating a Living Campus Environment

Strategic Objective B4: Create a living campus environment that is attractive to the University community and other stakeholders and visitors.

Action Strategies

B4.01 Develop campus plans and operations programs.

B4.02 Develop and improve facilities and amenities for campus living and activities for all people on all campuses.

B4.03 Plan and develop a multi-purpose University Centre on Central Campus.

B4.04 Enhance student housing programs.

B4.05 Develop and implement strategies to improve transportation access to the University.

B4.06 Strengthen safety, security, and disaster preparedness measures to ensure well-being of students, staff, faculty, and visitors on all campuses.

B4.07 Maintain buildings, infrastructure, and landscaping on all campuses to ensure a clean, aesthetically pleasing, and well maintained environment.

B4.08 Develop campus environmental stewardship and conservation strategy for campus, including recycling, electronic storage and dissemination of information, hazardous and toxic materials protocols, conservation landscaping, botanical plantings, and other measures.

C. CONTRIBUTING TO NATIONAL AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Goal C: The University of Belize will become the academic leader for national and local development and advancement of Belize through its education, research, and service.

The University of Belize was created and incorporated to be the national university of Belize. A national university contributes to the aspirations and capacity of the people of Belize. Our nation's development is about cultivating people and preserving our heritage. Development includes economic development, but also means social and lifestyle improvement, environmental stewardship, cultural enhancement, and moral integrity. A national university anticipates these national advancement needs and priorities, and then directs its energies and resources to building the capacity of the nation to achieve them. As a national body, it provides education, research and service for every region, every culture, every social group, every resource. The University of Belize must be a national, autonomous and multi-location institution.

There are four directions for achieving this strategic goal:

- C1. Creating a National Research and Service Function;
- C2. Building Research and Service Partnerships;
- C3. Establishing a National University Library and Information Centre;
- C4. Enhancing the University Profile.



C1. Creating a National Research and Service Function

Strategic Objective C1: Create a University-based national research and service function that demonstrates a capacity and commitment to participating in major national and local development and advancement initiatives of Belizeans.

Action Strategies

C1.01 Establish a UB National Research and Service Program designed to coordinate and facilitate research, service, and consultancy strategies and activities for the University, including the strategies below:

C1.02 Coordinate and facilitate research, service, and consultancy initiatives;

C1.03 Expand service learning programs and student clubs and provide active support for student government community-building initiatives;

C1.04 Establish a publications function to disseminate university research results to academia and the general public;

C1.05 Establish a research ethics policy, procedure, and review board to ensure research meets research ethics, international publication, academic integrity, and accreditation standards;

C1.06 Establish a conference, event, and workshop hosting program to facilitate academic and service events, to build linkages and visibility for the University's research and service functions, to involve the University in national research and service priorities, and to obtain revenues for research and service function;

C1.07 Consider proposals to establish and accommodate research groups and institutes at the University to address national and local issues, possibly in partnership with or funded by external institutions or stakeholders.

C2. Building Research and Service Partnerships

Strategic Objective C2: Build a network of active partnerships with key national and local stakeholders to share work toward national and local development work.

Action Strategies

C2.01 Establish active research and service partnerships with domestic and foreign academic institutions, scholars, and professionals.

C2.02 Establish research and service partnerships between University programs and related business, nongovernment, government, and international stakeholders.

C2.03 Examine opportunities and feasibility of constructing a research park office facility with office services for rental to partner organizations, linked to enhanced library facilities, to enable ongoing interaction and collaboration on common initiatives.

C3. Establishing a National University Library and Information Centre

Strategic Objective C3: Establish a National University Library and Information Centre as a comprehensive national repository and clearinghouse for information for all Belizeans.

Action Strategies

C3.01 Develop and implement a comprehensive library development plan to meet accreditation standards, including constructing a National University Library and Information Centre (NULIC) facility at the University to serve the comprehensive information needs of all Belizeans.

C3.02 Increase the library's published holdings, access to digital information, and other information.

C3.03 Increase the accessibility of library and information services to the University community and all Belizeans.

C4. Enhancing the University Profile

Strategic Objective C4: Enhance the image and profile of the University as a major institution in Belize.

Action Strategies

C4.01 Develop and implement a communications, public relations, information, and marketing program and campaign.

C4.02 Establish a strong and proactive Alumni and Outreach Office and promote the University of Belize Alumni Association to build a constituency throughout Belize.

D. IMPROVING GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Strategic Goal D: The University of Belize will establish governance and management systems that will enable it to fully achieve its mission, vision, core values, and strategic directions.

The grand plans for the establishment of a truly national university will require a strong governance and management system and wise use and development of financial resources. Governance and management are ongoing functions. The success of the University depends on these functions. The University faces a fiscal reality of scarce public funds for financing University programs. To finance the ambitious goals of becoming the national university, the University will need an aggressive program to make the best use of existing resources as well as find substantial new sources of revenue. This is not just the role of fundraising staff, but must become the pursuit of all faculty, staff, and students.

There are four directions for achieving this strategic goal:

- D1. Improving Governance;
- D2. Enhancing Management Systems;
- D3. Promoting Best Use of Resources;
- D4. Finding External Resources.

“As a student-centered university, UB is invested in providing services critical to your success as a student.”

President Santos Mahung

D1. Improving Governance

Strategic Objective D1: Establish sound governance for the University.

Action Strategies

D1.01 Improve the legislative and policy basis for University governance.

D1.02 Improve board governance through establishing governance best practices, developing a governance manual, and conducting orientation and training.

D1.03 Establish academic and administrative councils to foster transparency, accountability, relevance, and shared decision-making.

D1.04 Retain the services of an attorney to assist the University with legal issues and policy matters.

D2. Enhancing Management System

Strategic Objective D2: Establish an effective, efficient, and fair management system for the University.

Action Strategies

D2.01 Improve, enhance, and strengthen the management systems of the University.

D2.02 Establish a university-wide system of planning and evaluation in order to plan and evaluate all activities and programs.

D2.03 Provide relevant leadership development and training for all management, staff, and faculty positions.

D2.04 Improve communications systems and processes.

D2.05 Construct adequate administration facilities with sufficient space, equipment, offices, and meeting rooms which are conducive to and appropriate for management and communication.

D3. Promoting Best Use of Resources

Strategic Objective D3: Promote stewardship and wise use of the resources of the University.

Action Strategies

D3.01 Develop and implement a University strategy to increase cost-effectiveness and efficiency in the use of resources and campus facilities

D3.02 Develop advanced accounting and reporting policies and procedures for ensuring institutional approval, oversight, transparency, and accountability for all external funding received from all sources and all externally-contracted projects.

D3.03 Explore and promote ways to use its existing facilities and assets to increase revenues.

D3.04 Create incentives and motivation for faculty and staff to use resources efficiency.

D4. Finding External Resources

Strategic Objective D4: Increase and diversify financial resources of the University in order to achieve the Vision.

Action Strategies

D4.01 Establish and give high priority to the Office for Resource Development to identify and secure external sources of funding and other resources.

D4.02 Consider retaining professional and proven fundraiser or fundraising organization to assess and develop fundraising program both domestically and internationally.

D4.03 Consider establishing a University of Belize Endowment Fund to administer capital donations to the University.

D4.04 Provide strong support for the ongoing development of the Alumni Association with chapters in each district to build networks among former students and cooperation with university programs.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

This Plan is a roadmap for the future. It needs your help to become a reality:

- Read and familiarize yourself with the Plan;
- Provide comments and suggestions through the UB website;
- Identify how you can help implement the Plan in your work;
- Ensure departmental work plans reflect strategic plan priorities;
- Identify ways to use resources efficiently or find new funding and resources.
- Through your company, organization, Ministry, Department or Institution, partner with us by:
 - Providing opportunities for UB students to complete internships;
 - Reviewing our programmes and engaging us in on-going dialogue that allows us to better address your expectations and needs in the graduates we prepare;
 - Using our available human expertise and physical resources to provide research, academic and technical services;
 - Sharing your short, medium and long-term plans in areas that allow us to contribute to your development goals;
 - Supporting our initiatives aimed at facilitating access to UB scholarships b deserving Belizean students.

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