Office of Academic Affairs Guide to Creating Strategic Plan Metrics

College and support unit strategic plans should include metrics that demonstrate progress toward desired outcomes in areas critical to their mission and earmarked for improvement. Below are some criteria that will help you to create quality metrics and avoid the most common pitfalls.

**Metrics are objectively measurable.** Lots of ideas for metrics seem good until you try to operationalize them. One test of the quality of a metric is whether or not you can actually count whatever it is that you’re describing. In addition, it’s important that all relevant parties agree that the metrics appropriately measure what they are intended to measure.

- **Graduates will have better employment outcomes.**
- **Objective and measurable**
  - The percentage of graduates who are employed one month after commencement or who are enrolled in graduate school will increase by X%.

**Scorecards include only the highest level metrics.** It’s important to monitor the steps and strategies along the way to the big goals, but not all of the information belongs on the scorecard.

- **College will add twelve undergraduate minor programs.**
  - Measures the ultimate goal
  - College will increase enrollments by 15%.

**Fewer metrics better communicate priorities and focus.** Streamline your scorecards by creating indices and eliminating duplication.

- **The average ACT score for new undergraduates will increase to 30.**
- **The average GMAT score for new MBA students will increase to 675.**
- **The average GRE score for new doctoral students will increase to 750.**

**Use Yes/No metrics sparingly.** Try to avoid using Yes/No metrics, since they say nothing about level of performance. This type of metric can make sense if you are planning a new venture and the measure is simply whether you’ve done it or not, but it should be revised to quantify progress as soon as the metric moves from “No” to “Yes.”

- **Capital Investment Plan Developed and Approved:** Yes
  - As soon as the response to this metric becomes “Yes,” the metric should be revised to track quantitative information about the success of the capital investments over time.

**Sources:**
- [http://www.orau.gov/pbm/documents/overview/uc.html](http://www.orau.gov/pbm/documents/overview/uc.html)