Positioning Statement

The Missouri State University System successfully recruits, retains and graduates a diverse student body so they are successful alumni providing leadership in their communities. Through a combination of good stewardship of resources, management best practices, performance measures, and innovative education strategies, the University provides undergraduate and graduate programs and experiences with regional, national and international reputations for excellence and which are informed by its statewide mission in public affairs. In addition, the University plays a significant role in economic development for the benefit of the area, the state and the Midwest.

Implied Strategic Direction Decisions from the Positioning Statement

“Missouri State University System successfully recruits, retains and graduates….”

- Achieve a six-year graduation rate of 60 percent on the Springfield Campus
- Provide well-rounded collegiate co-curricular experience for all students through, leadership opportunities, cultural, social and emotional growth, service learning and a broad-based intercollegiate athletics program, as well as recreational and wellness programs
- Ensure Faculty Roles and Rewards are aligned with University goals and priorities in teaching, research/scholarly activity, and service
- Develop a comprehensive compensation plan for faculty and staff
- Ensure the plans and activities of West Plains and Mountain Grove are coordinated and consistent with the System plan

“…..a diverse student body…..”

- Dramatically improve the diversity of faculty, staff and students by adopting and fully implementing the AAC&U’s “Inclusive Excellence” model
- Create a positive campus climate for inclusion
- Take a leadership role in the community to improve support for diverse populations
- Implement and fund specific tactics to achieve the goals (ie, “grow your own” through financial support of senior year and/or graduate education….use of visiting faculty members….use of post-docs….fully implement diversity hiring initiative….insist on diverse
candidate pools….partner more closely with other public entities [City, City Utilities, hospitals, R-12 Schools, etc.], especially for dual-career couples, improve on-going training, use minority recruiters specifically assigned to Kansas City and St. Louis, provide transportation from Kansas City and St. Louis for campus visits, etc.)

- Educate a diverse student body with a diverse workforce

“…..so they are successful alumni providing leadership in their communities.”

- Provide foundation for alumni to enroll in graduate programs, attain professional degrees, appreciate lifelong learning, and have successful careers and lives
- Provide public affairs education and experiences so that alumni fulfill the three components of that mission
- Provide after-graduation programs to meet the needs of our students and the university
- Continue implementation of the campus-wide Graduate Tracking System to measure outcomes of degree programs
- Serve alumni with the full range of Career Center resources: professional credentials assistance (resumes, letters, vitae, statements of purpose, etc.), career counseling, campus interviews, job board, and job search counseling, all of which is available in person or via the internet.
- Expand the practice of utilizing alumni as mentors for students with whom we do career counseling (i.e., Career Center Employer Advisory Board and job shadow-providers)

“Through a combination of good stewardship of resources, management best practices…..”

- Operate within a balanced budget
- Implement cost control measures as appropriate
- Effectively use all revenues (state appropriations, tuition and fees, other)
- Keep student tuition, fees, and other expenses at reasonable, competitive levels
- Strategically use scholarships and financial aid to recruit and retain students
- Be vigilant in maintaining a safe and secure campus
- Provide a positive, encouraging work environment
- Operate in an environmentally-friendly/sustainable/green manner
- Make maximum use of its facilities
- Use existing staff resources in the most efficient manner
- Remain current on and use best business practices

“…performance measures,…..”

- Accountability is and will continue to be an important component of any strategic plan
- Appropriate performance measures will be established as part of the scorecard
- The scorecard will be updated when new data is available, but at least annually
“…..and innovative education strategies,…..”

- Look for opportunities for collaboration with other institutions in the area and throughout the state
- Upgrade pedagogy to reflect best practices
- Make effective use of alternative modalities, including evening and weekend classes, increased use of on-line courses, etc.
- Ensure the University is using best practices on 2+2, transfer articulation, advising, Executive MBA, etc.
- Develop living, learning facilities, technology and services to support excellence
- Plan and fund state-of-the-art classrooms/facilities/technology
- Reaffirm that advising programs are effective, especially with high demand/high rigor programs

“….the University provides undergraduate programs and experiences that have regional, national and international reputations for excellence…….”

- Provide expanded access to higher education for qualified students
- Prepare increasing numbers of students on the West Plains Campus to be successful transfer students and thereby helping break the “cycle of poverty” through education
- Conduct a comprehensive academic program prioritization and reallocate funds to selected excellent programs
- Review and revision of core curriculum with emphasis on critical thinking, communication and quantitative skills
  - Ensure that the Public Affairs mission is effectively woven into the entire undergraduate curriculum
- Focus on outcomes and assessment
- Promote and enhance undergraduate research
- Expand retention programs to assure a freshman-to-sophomore persistence rate of 85%

“The University accomplishes this by providing graduate programs and experiences that have regional, national and international reputations for excellence…..”

- For the programs we offer, strive to become the “graduate provider of choice” in Missouri
- Expand existing graduate programs where there is capacity and demonstrated need
- Implement systems to assist graduate program directors in admission and tracking students through degree completion
- Strategically increase the number of graduate programs, including additional selected cooperative master’s degree programs with other universities and selected cooperative
doctoral programs with the University of Missouri, especially where there is community need and/or market demand, such as a Doctor of Pharmacy Degree

- Effectively utilize research and program collaborations to expand capacity and delivery of graduate education
- Enhance and strategically support utilization of Graduate Assistants
- Provide, space, release time, equipment and other support for research/scholarly activity
- **Ensure we are fully utilizing the research potential of the Mountain Grove Campus**
- Hire faculty according to this emphasis
- Increase extramural funding

“.....which are informed by its statewide mission in public affairs.”

- Effectively articulate the public affairs mission
- Effectively incorporate public affairs into core curriculum
- Effectively incorporate public affairs into academic programs at both the undergraduate and graduate
- Explore the possibility of establishing a doctoral program in public affairs
- Consider establishing an interdisciplinary School of Public Affairs
- Develop a research cluster around the public affairs mission

“In addition, the University plays a significant role in economic development for the benefit of the area, the state and the Midwest.”

- Expand IDEA Commons, JVIC and related initiatives
- Focus research energies, resources, etc. on selected areas related to economic development, including nanotechnology, biomedical devices, agriculture, water/environment, and other “science in the public interest”
- Build graduate programs to support the research emphasis
- Link research and economic development activities to both student learning and the public affairs mission
- Consider strategies to increase capacity and enhance resources
- Include a community-focused research cluster to address the social/red flag/quality of life issues that impact economic development, and partner with community organizations to achieve this goal